■ Lifestyle / D2

Perfect prom dress with a corsage to last beyond the night

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NBI finds 9 cops liable for Luisita dispersal deaths

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American execs tagged undesirable aliens for not paying taxes

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US scientists discover key element that may lead to vaccine vs AIDS

■ News / A7-A8

Full list of 1,084 new doctors

ARMM 'Abu' law strikes fear among Muslim fathers

NAKAKATAKOT NAMAN YAN, TERRORISTA ANG DATING!

By Nash B. Maulana
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—A new regional law on name-calling is striking terror among male parents in the Autonomous

ARMM/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Portrait of Filipino courage gone from US Army museum

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—A hero of the historic Los Baños raid of 1945 raised his concern over the removal of a painting depicting the heroism of Filipino guerrillas during World War II from a US Army museum in San Fran-

PORTRAIT/ A13

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Friday, February 25, 2005 ★★ 72 pages 8 sections Vol. 20 No. 79 P18

website: www.inq7.net

'They are not recycled'

PNP says 4 terrorist suspects planned, funded V-Day blast

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has commended the military and police for their "string of successes" against terrorism, but the four men whom the Philippine National Police yesterday paraded in Camp Crame have been in PNP custody since last December.

"Definitely, they're not recycled,", Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, director of the PNP Intelligence Group, said of the four men. "We purposely intended to withhold their presentation."

The four—Indonesians Mohammad Nasir Hamid and Mohammed Yusop Karim Faiz and Malaysian Ted Yolanda, all alleged members of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional terrorist network, and Filipino Muhajir de la Merced, allegedly of the Abu Sayyaf—were presented to the media under heavy security.

De la Merced, supposedly a convert to Islam, shouted "Allahu akbar (God is great)!" while being ushered into the conference room.

The four have been in police custody since last Dec. 14, when they were arrested at the Zamboanga City port.

Shortly before the announced press conference, Rafanan told reporters that the four men "did the planning and brought the fund" for the Valentine's Day bombings.

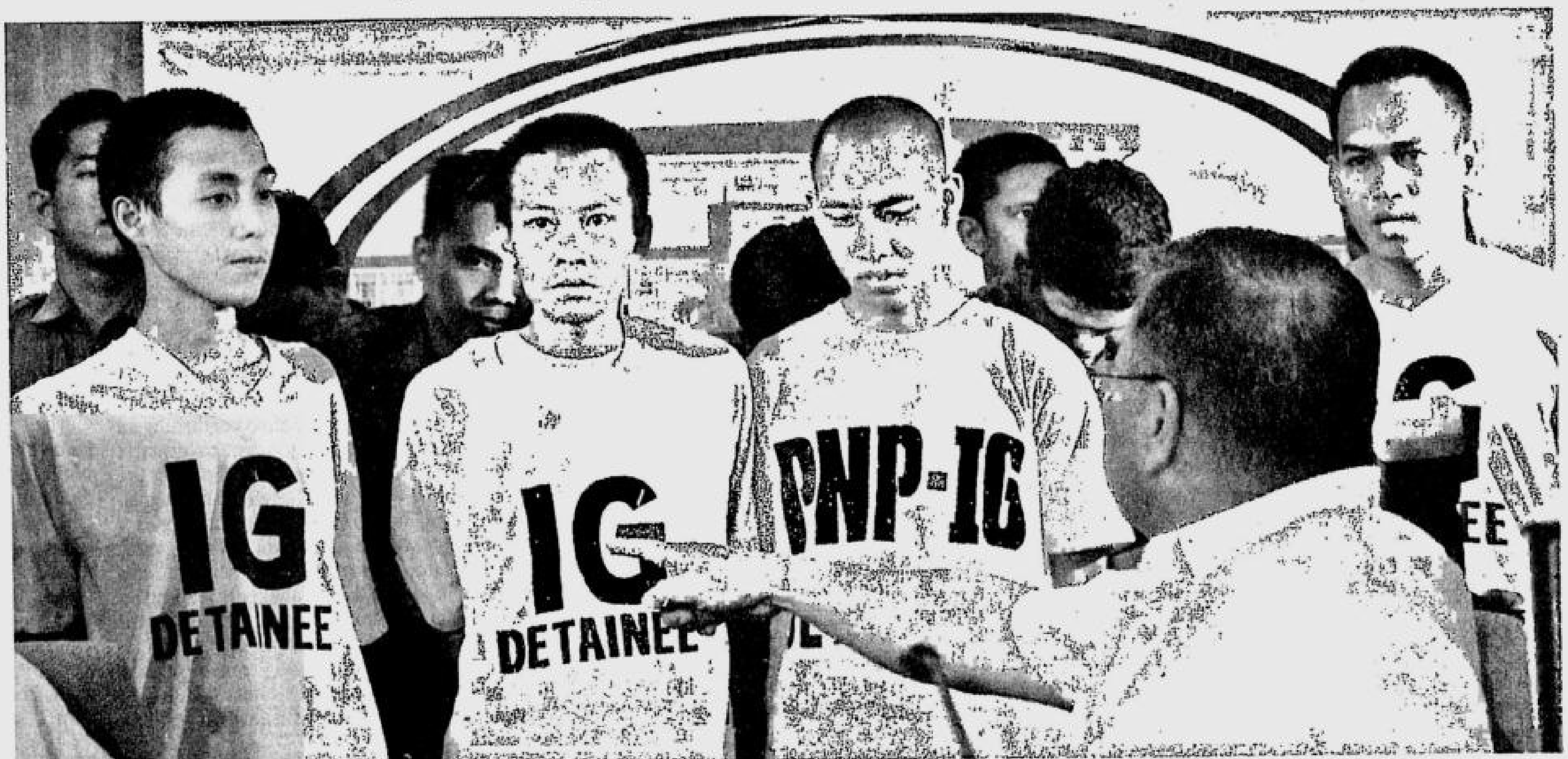
He said the PNP announced their arrest only yesterday "because we had a lot of follow-ups to do, like the identification of the local components of the JI and Abu Sayyaf cells."

Among the cells identified is one based in Metro Manila, Rafanan said. But he did not elaborate, saying intelligence operatives were still working on the case.

When asked at the press conference about the four men's actual participation in the Feb. 14 bombings, Rafanan said police were still "in the process of checking or verifying their possible involvement."

"For now, we cannot officially link them

THEY/ A6



ARRESTED last December in Zamboanga City but presented only yesterday by Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes at Camp Crame are three terrorist suspects allegedly belonging to the Jemaah Islamiyah and a member of the Abu Sayyaf. From left, Mohammad Yusop Karim Faiz, Mohammad Ted Yolanda, Mohammad Nasir Hamid and Muhajir de la Merced. The last, a member of the Abu Sayyaf special operations group, shouted "Allahu Akbar" (God is great) during the press conference. MITCH MAURICIO

Suzette Huang out of hospital; cops guarding her

By Luige A. del Puerto
and Christian V. Esguerra

SUZETTE See Huang (not Wang as earlier reported), the woman who, together with former Rep. Dennis Roldan, allegedly masterminded the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Chinese-Filipino boy was discharged from the San Juan Medical Center at 4:30 p.m. yesterday.

The police did not arrest her.

"She was discharged 10 minutes ago," Dr. Lorenzo Hocson, the medical center's director, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Huang had tried to jump off the 9th floor of a condominium in San Juan, Metro Manila, the other day. She later slashed her left wrist. "The official report of the San Juan Police is attempted suicide," a police officer said.

The fact that she was discharged meant the injury she suffered was minor. "She is OK already," Hocson said.

Supt. Rodel Jocson, San Juan police chief, said that as far as he knew, the police had no arrest warrant against Huang. "The (hospital) called earlier to say she was to be discharged," the police chief said.

Media people were barred from checking on the woman whom police have accused of luring Roldan into the kidnapping business.

Police learned from relatives who came to visit the woman that her English name was "Suzette Huang."

Jocson said his men rescued Huang at around 1 p.m. from a condominium in Barangay Pasadena. "Our men had to rappel from the 10th floor to get to the 9th floor. She locked the door," he said.

The policemen then rushed her to the San Juan Medical Center, where she initially gave the name "Ah-Dian Shir," Jocson said.

Police have virtually thrown a security blanket around Huang.

But Philippine National Police Direc-

SUZETTE/ A13

THE ORIGINAL EDSA

Colonel still not talking on plot to kill Imelda

By Fe Zamora

ARMY Col. Ricardo Morales was given the task of assassinating Imelda Marcos in 1986. Nineteen years later, Morales still refuses to talk about it.

"Maybe next year, maybe never," Morales said, in response to an INQUIRER request for an interview on his role in the military plot to oust the strongman Ferdinand Marcos that triggered the People Power uprising on Feb. 22-25, 1986.

On the night of Feb. 22, 1986, Marcos announced on television that his security group had discovered a plot to kill him and his wife, Imelda. Marcos said the plotters had been identified, with four of them already in custody.

Among those who were arrested was Morales, the chief security escort of the First Lady and apparently one of her favorites. She had made sure that he earned his master's degree at the Asian Institute of Management as a presidential scholar.

Imelda was also known to bring along Morales in her foreign trips,

COLONEL/ A22

Militant group unhappy; Loi says forget 'Uno, Dos'

NOT EVERYONE is enthused about the 19th anniversary of Edsa I.

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan yesterday lamented that almost two decades after the first People Power uprising drove the strongman Ferdinand Marcos out of Malacañang, Filipinos continued to suffer for his "sins."

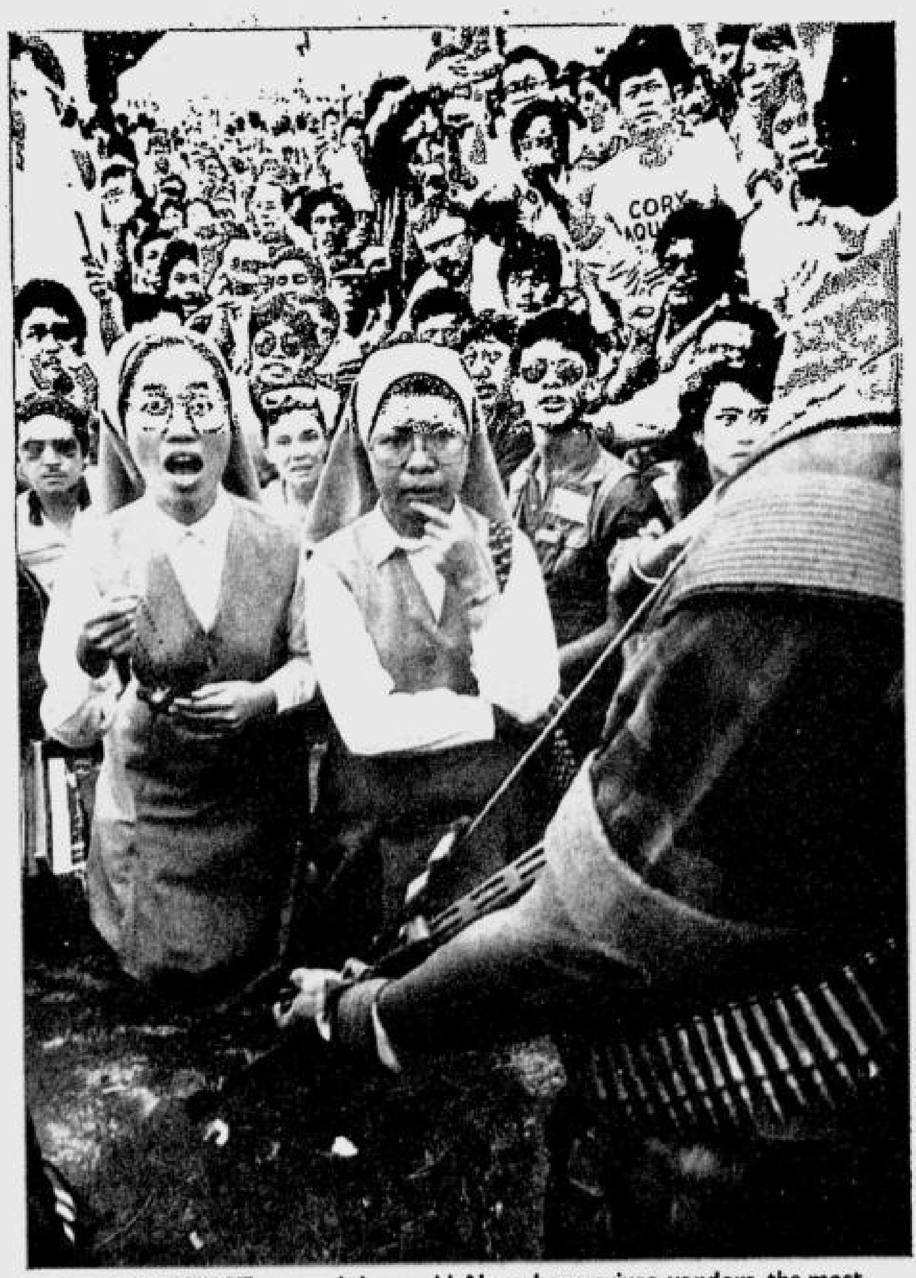
Bayan urged the government to take radical steps in addressing the problem of Marcos' fraudulent foreign debts, and called for the repudiation of the debts that had failed to benefit the country, such as those involving the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP).

"It's a slap on the face of the people that we continue to pay for those odious Marcos debts. It's been 19 years and we're still suffering for the sins of the dictator," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes said, adding:

"This year we have to pay P2 billion for the BNPP. That is patently immoral."

Earlier, President Macapagal-Arroyo warned that the Philippines' economic gains would be for naught

MILITANT/ A22



FROM THE PEOPLE POWER BOOK

THE PICTURE THAT stunned the world: Nuns, housewives, vendors, the most ordinary of Filipinos confront guns and tanks; prayer power stops military might during a people's revolt. And not a single shot was fired.

'The real Revolution is yet to be'

By Eugenia Duran-Apostol

(The author is the INQUIRER founding chair. She now chairs the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.)

(Last of two parts)

"THE UNSTATED goal of the People Power Revolution was not a mere change of regimes, but rather a systemic change, a real social transformation."

So did the late Ambassador Narciso G. Reyes describe the impact of Edsa I in an article he wrote in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on Nov. 2, 1986.

He continued: "This will entail not only a change of leaders but also—and more important—a change of heart on the part of the new leadership. In this sense, the People Power Revolution was a prelude, rather than a complete fulfillment. The real Revolution is yet to be."

Fifteen years later, on Jan. 16, 2001, Filipinos felt called upon to remove another President, this time the corrupt Joseph Estrada—by what is now known as Edsa II. A repeat of 1986.

So we asked ourselves: How do we achieve a real social transformation?

By holding seminar after seminar on the topic, the Foundation for Worldwide People Power found what we think is the answer: Bring People Power to bear on education improvement at the community level.

In 1998, Congress enacted Republic Act No. 8525. This statute

THE REAL/ A22

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/25/05

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

NBI finds 9 cops liable for Luisita dispersal deaths

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has recommended that nine policemen be charged with multiple homicide, frustrated and attempted homicide, and physical injuries for the death of seven workers and the wounding of 36 others in the violent dispersal of a workers' strike at the Hacienda Luisita last November.

The recommendation is contained in the NBI's final report on the case which was submitted to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez last week, according to sources in the agency.

Gonzalez is said to be studying the report and is expected to announce the findings soon.

The report, prepared by NBI investigators assigned to probe the Nov. 16 police dispersal that stemmed from a labor dispute, gave more weight to the statements of the Hacienda Luisita's striking workers, according to one source.

More credible

"We found that the protesters were more credible than the government agents," said the source, quoting from the report.

The report found that the nine policemen recommended for prosecution all tested positive in paraffin tests.

A paraffin test is conducted to determine if a person had recently fired a gun, although the sources noted that the test may not always be conclusive.

The highest-ranking policeman who may likely face charges is a senior inspector. The rest are police officers, with ranks 1 and 2.

According to the source, the bullets that hit the workers who died were fired from a distance, which indicated that the policemen, who were on the other side of the hacienda's fence, were responsible for the fatal shots.

It also indicated that the policemen's claim that the workers were the ones who fired the shots that hit their co-workers lacked merit.

The source said that if it was the striking workers who had fired the shots that killed the seven men, the wounds would have shown that the bullets were fired at close range.

Wounds

The report also noted that the wounds of the injured workers were found on their backs, indicating that they were fleeing when they were shot.

"Nobody from the government side was hit by bullets," the source added.

The source also said that investigators found the workers' statements to be more consistent and detailed than the policemen's.

But the report also noted that more policemen and military than workers were injured in the dispersal.

In the Nov. 16 dispersal, 53 policemen, 29 Armed Forces members, six Air Force members and five firefighters, or a total of 93 on the government side, were wounded.

On Nov. 15, 10 policemen were also wounded in a clash with hacienda workers.

The NBI investigators interviewed protesting Hacienda Luisita workers, policemen, neutral observers like members of the media, and other government personnel who were involved in the issue.

GMA believes Nur ordered Sulu attacks

MISUARI

DESPITE Nur Misuari's strong denials, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Armed Forces Chief Gen. Efren Abu yesterday indicated they believed reports that the detained Moro leader had ordered his followers to attack an Army brigade that led to the clashes in Jolo, Sulu early this month.

"We have intelligence reports that are the basis of our own conclusions," Ms Arroyo said at a press conference yesterday.

The press briefing was preceded by a mass oathtaking of 46 generals who had been promoted. Abu also got his fourth star at the Palace ceremony.

"The MNLF breakaway group will not act without orders from higher authorities," said Abu who was asked by the President to explain Misuari's role in the two-week clashes between government troops and remnants from the Moro National Liberation Front that killed 30 soldiers and scores of rebels and displaced 30,000 people.

Abu said that as early as November, troops in Mindanao had been receiving reports that the MNLF breakaway group identified with Misuari was "restless."

"Our troops were treacherously attacked. It was not a knee-jerk situation," Abu said.

He described as "flimsy reasons" Misuari's contention that the renewed hostilities with the MNLF had been triggered by government soldiers' alleged killing of a Muslim family.

In a congressional committee hearing last Tuesday in his jail cell in Fort Sto. Domingo, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, Misuari denied that he had ordered his followers to launch the attack by cell phone.

The House special committee on peace, reconciliation and national unity, which is conducting an inquiry into the Sulu clashes, had gone to Misuari's jail cell to get the Moro leader's testimony on the renewed fighting with the MNLF which had signed a peace agreement with the government in 1996.

Misuari, the MNLF founder and former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, is being detained for allegedly leading an armed rebellion in 2001 to stop the holding of ARMM elections.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita disclosed the discovery of Misuari's phone calls, which prompted jail guards to ban Misuari's access to a phone and bar him from receiving guests.

Asked if the government would be declaring a ceasefire to end the hostilities in Jolo, the President said she was waiting for a recommendation from Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz.

Cruz said, however, that the military's Southern Command was in the "last stages of completing its mission and attaining its objectives" in Jolo.

He said he would be discussing the issue with Abu, Southcom chief Gen. Alberto Braganza before making his recommendation to the President.

The President said the government was "constantly reviewing" its compliance with the terms of the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF.

She said the government had "complied substantially" with the terms of the agreement, citing the creation and expansion of the Muslim-led autonomous region, the shariah courts, the madrasah schools, the number of Muslims in high levels of government.

"Then a lot of development assistance is going to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. In fact, other non-Muslim provinces are already getting jealous of the amount of assistance going to Mindanao," Ms Arroyo said. *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

NOW IN ITS 20TH YEAR
THE PRES. ELPIDIO QUIRINO SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS
₱10.5 MILLION WORTH OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN ANY OF THE FOUR- OR FIVE-YEAR PROGRAMS OFFERED AT TIP

Bona fide public or private fourth year high school students with 85% or above third grading period general average or grade in Math IV, Science IV, or English IV qualify for the competitive examinations for the following grants:

Presidential Scholar (1st Placer) - Outlay of ₱100,000.00 to cover fifty (50) monthly stipends of ₱2,000.00 per month through five (5) school years for board and lodging, books, transportation and other basic miscellaneous expenses, plus an outlay of ₱171,000.00 to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous fees throughout the course in any of the four- or five-year programs requiring board exams offered at the TIP ₱271,000.00

2nd to 61st Placers - Outlay of ₱171,000 for each of the sixty (60) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the course in any of the four- or five-year programs requiring board exams offered at the TIP ₱10,260,000.00

Total ₱10,531,000.00

NOW IN ITS 9TH YEAR
THE GOV. DEMETRIO QUIRINO, SR. SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS
₱7.55 MILLION WORTH OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE ACCOUNTANCY PROGRAM AT TIP MANILA

Bona fide public or private fourth year high school students with 83% or above third grading period general average or grade in Math IV, Science IV, or English IV qualify for the competitive examinations for the following grants:

1st Placer - Outlay of ₱60,000.00 to cover forty (40) monthly stipends of ₱1,500.00 per month through four (4) school years for board and lodging, books, transportation and other basic miscellaneous expenses, plus an outlay of ₱125,400.00 to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous fees throughout the Accountancy program at TIP Manila ₱185,400.00

2nd to 51st Placers - Outlay of ₱125,400.00 for each of the fifty (50) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the Accountancy program at TIP Manila ₱6,270,000.00

52nd to 131st Placers - Outlay of ₱13,630.00 for each of the eighty (80) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees for one (1) semester in the Accountancy program at TIP Manila ₱1,090,400.00

Total ₱7,545,800.00

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THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS OF TIP

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Bona fide public or private fourth year high school students with 80% or above third grading period general average or grade in Math IV, Science IV, or English IV qualify for the competitive examinations for the following grants:

1st Placer - Outlay of ₱50,000.00 to cover fifty (50) monthly stipends of ₱1,000.00 per month through five (5) school years, plus an outlay of P171,000.00 to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous fees throughout the Architecture program or in any four- or five-year Engineering program requiring board examinations offered at the TIP P221,000.00

2nd to 41st Placers - Outlay of P171,000.00 for each of the forty (40) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the Architecture program or in any four- or five-year Engineering program requiring board examinations offered at the TIP ₱6,840,000.00

42nd to 101st Placers - Outlay of P13,500.00 for each of the sixty (60) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees for one (1) semester in Architecture or in any four- or five-year Engineering program requiring board examinations offered at the TIP ₱810,000.00

Total ₱7,871,000.00

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Tel. 911-0140 / 912-1539

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:
■ Form 138 (High School Card) or
certified copy with grades up to 3rd Grading Period
■ 2 copies of 2" x 2" ID Picture

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:
■ Pres. Elpidio Quirino Friday, March 4, 2005
■ Gov. Demetrio Quirino, Sr. Friday, March 11, 2005
■ Sec. Guillermo De Vega Friday, March 18, 2005

SCHEDULE OF EXAMINATIONS:
■ Pres. Elpidio Quirino Saturday, March 5, 2005
■ Gov. Demetrio Quirino, Sr. Saturday, March 12, 2005
■ Sec. Guillermo De Vega Saturday, March 19, 2005

■ TIME AND PLACE OF EXAMINATIONS:
9:00-11:00 AM, TIP MANILA AND TIP QUEZON CITY

OTHER ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS AND DISCOUNTS

	CATEGORY	GRANTS	PERIOD COVERED
1.	HONOR STUDENTS		
1.1	Valedictorian	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	2 Semesters
		₱1,000.00 Stipend per Semester	2 Semesters
1.2	Salutatorian	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	2 Semesters
		₱1,000.00 Stipend per Semester	1 Semester
1.3	3rd-10th Ranking High School Graduate	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	1 Semester
2.	OTHER DISCOUNTS BASED ON GENERAL AVERAGE IN 4TH YEAR HIGH SCHOOL OR FINAL GRADE IN MATH IV, ENGLISH IV, OR SCIENCE IV		
2.1	90% or above	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	1 Semester
2.2	85% - 89%	Free Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.3	83% - 84%	80% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.4	81% - 82%	60% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.5	80%	50% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester

Gov't to join $300-M SMC stock rights offering

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

IN A MOVE to protect the value of the coconut farmers' share in San Miguel Corp., President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the government would participate in the food conglomerate's $300-million stock rights offering using money from government financial institutions (GFIs).

President Arroyo has been advised that failure to take part in the stock rights offer will unduly dilute the Coconut Industry Investment Fund's shareholdings in SMC and cost the government a board seat. This would mean a loss in premium price on these coco levy shares when they are sold as a block with the shares held by the state pension fund.

"Yes, to the extent that the SSS (Social Security System), GSIS (Government Service and Insurance System) and the Development Bank of the Philippines can finance the Philippine government," the President said when asked if the government would allow the coco levy shares to be diluted by waiving its rights to buy the SMC shares.

"(We have) to keep hold of our shares so that when we sell our shares, we sell them for a good price," said the President, contradicting Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima's declaration Wednesday that the government would not join the rights offering because it had no P8 billion to spare for capital-raising exercise.

Purisima has been tasked by the President to oversee the sale of the government's 41 percent shareholdings in SMC—27 percent from the CIIF and 7 percent each from the SSS and GSIS—to generate funds for use in developing the coconut industry.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, who proposed that the government tap GFIs for the rights offer, hailed the President's move to take a direct hand in protecting the coconut farmers' SMC shares.

"She sends a strong signal to farmers of her commitment to protect their welfare and advance their interest. She also expressed the government's faith in the prospects of the stock market," Salceda said.

He also said that the President's move would also help prevent a possible court case that was likely to be filed by coconut farmers who would be incensed by the dilution of their SMC shares.

Participating in the stock rights offer was the only right thing to do for the government because as fund manager for the coconut farmers, it was duty bound to protect the value of the SMC shares.

At 41 percent interest and five board seats, Salceda said that the government block in SMC would give its buyer "control" of one of the country's crown jewels.

Salceda said the 27 percent coco levy shares were made up of 240 million "B" shares, the single biggest block not yet held by Japan's beer giant Kirin Brewery.

Foreigners can only buy "B" shares because "A" shares are limited to Filipinos.

If the government's shares are diluted, Salceda said the coco levy shares would not only lose at least P2 billion of its value but also become less attractive to buyers who were less likely to pay a high price for shares that would give them minority control in a corporation.

A dilution would mean virtually ceding control of the company to the triumvirate of SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco (18 percent), retail king Henry Sy (6 percent) and Kirin (20 percent) that endorsed the rights offer to the 15-member SMC board. (Cojuangco's stake is still being disputed by the government in court.)

The 1 is to 10 rights offer, which will raise between $280 million to $300 million, will be priced on Monday.

Sheriffs fail to serve arrest warrants on Piatco consultants

By Armand N. Nocum

SANDIGANBAYAN sheriffs were unable to serve yesterday arrest warrants to two German nationals and a Filipino consultant accused of irregularly amending the contract for the construction of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 project, to the detriment of the government.

Sandiganbayan chief sheriff Edgardo Urieta said his agents tried to serve the arrest warrants on German consultants Arthur Vogel, Bernd Struck and Filipino Alfredo Liongson at the Pasay City office of the Philippine International Air Terminals, Co. (Piatco), the Terminal 3 contractor, but failed.

"They were not at the office listed as their addresses," Urieta said, adding that the three may have already left the country.

However, copies of the arrest warrants have been sent to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the National Bureau of Investigation, he said.

"They know what to do," Urieta said.

The Sandiganbayan last Wednesday ordered the arrest of Vogel, Struck and Liongson in connection with alleged irregularities surrounding the construction of Terminal 3.

The government in 2003 revoked Piatco's "build-operate-transfer" contract to build the terminal on the grounds that certain terms were illegally renegotiated by deposed President Estrada in 1998.

Last December, the government expropriated the mothballed facility following a Supreme Court ruling voiding the government's contracts with Piatco.

Vogel and Struck, Piatco director and consultant, respectively, are facing graft charges before the Sandiganbayan for the alleged irregularities in the Terminal 3 contract, along with Liongson, several government officials and a number of Filipino businessmen.

The two Germans are accused of conspiring with three Filipino colleagues and government officials to add "onerous provisions" to the Naia 3 contract.

State prosecutors said the two Germans allegedly conspired with the Filipinos to negotiate in 2001 for the construction of a "less expensive access road" which was to connect the Naia's Terminals 2 and 3 "instead of an access tunnel, resulting in immense savings to Piatco."

Three former transportation secretaries—Vicente Rivera Jr., Pantaleon Alvarez and Wilfredo Trinidad—have been charged with graft.

Other respondents include former Transportation Undersecretary Primitivo Cal, former Manila International Airport Authority general manager Francisco Atayde, Piatco chair Henry T. Go and Piatco president Cheng Yong.

Alvarez, Cal, Atayde and Trinidad were charged with "conspiring, confederating and mutually helping each other" to "unlawfully and criminally" favor the PairCargo Consortium, which later became Piatco.

The Piatco consortium include the German-based Fraport which invested $650 million in the project.

GMA won't say who'll be next chief of PNP

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has picked the next chief of the Philippine National Police but has decided to keep everyone guessing until Edgar Aglipay completes his stint next month.

"I have," Ms Arroyo said in a press conference in Malacañang when asked if she has made up her mind on who will replace Aglipay, who is retiring at the end of March. "But I will announce it in due time."

The President departed from her earlier practice of naming her choice in advance.

"You know, General Aglipay is still doing so much so let us not make a lame duck out of him," Ms Arroyo said.

She said she only announced in advance the replacements for PNP chiefs Leandro Mendoza and Hermogenes Ebdane because they served for a "very, very long time."

"And General Aglipay is serving seven months. Let us give him each day of the seven months, he has been able to do so much," Ms Arroyo said in the press conference where Aglipay, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita were present.

Habitat to send experts to Aceh

IN THE face of the massive devastation wrought by the tsunami disaster last December, many rich countries and international relief organizations have sent a veritable tsunami of aid in its wake. So what can a nonprofit organization from a country like the Philippines do?

Habitat for Humanity Philippines, which builds houses for the nation's poor, will help by sending a small team of construction experts to advise their counterparts in Habitat for Humanity Indonesia how to build a lot of houses for a lot of people at a quicker pace. The houses should be decent, affordable and durable.

"We can't send money, because the need for housing for our own country's poor is great by itself," said Bert Jugo, a retired banking and Manila Water executive who now heads Habitat's operations in the Philippines. "So we send what we have a lot of—expertise in disaster rehabilitation, particularly for post-disaster housing."

Expertise in building decent, durable and affordable housing for the poor is something that Habitat has built in its internal capabilities through the many projects it has established since it began operations in 1988. Particularly, it is the technology developed in building houses for the fire victims of Baseco in the Port Area, Manila, that Habitat Philippines will be sharing to help rebuild homes in Aceh, Indonesia.

In the Baseco project, Habitat Philippines adopted and refined techniques that allow it to build a row house of eight units in as little as seven days (starting with a concrete slab that has previously been cured also for seven days). It uses lightweight steel frames that are assembled and bolted onto the slab, galvanized aluminum roofing that keeps occupants cool even in the tropical heat, and cement-fiber boards for walls. These are easily assembled by a crew consisting mostly of volunteers and the homeowners themselves.

"It's not really a low-cost technology, in the sense of being cheap," says Jugo, who notes that the steel frames are imported from Australia and are cut with computer-guided equipment. "But with good project management, sweat equity and volunteer labor, we can keep house costs within the target ceiling of P35,000 per unit."

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GMA goes easy on death penalty

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday hinted that the death penalty was unlikely to be implemented under her watch even for convicted leaders of kidnap-for-ransom gangs and drug syndicates.

"Only if absolutely required by the times," Ms Arroyo replied when asked if there was any chance that the death penalty would be implemented under her term.

The President also appears to have toned down her contempt against criminals, including kidnappers. "We were able to solve the kidnapping problem without imposing the death penalty. In fact, Tessie Ang See, I understand, is against the death penalty," said the President.

Calls for the imposition of the death penalty specifically for kidnappers were resurrected recently following the capture of alleged kidnapper, former Rep. Dennis Roldan, and the Abu Sayyaf bandits behind the Valentine's Day bombings.

The President has imposed a moratorium on the maximum penalty on criminals since she assumed power in 2001. She later modified her position by making an exception for kidnappers and drug lords in view of the rising number of kidnap-for-ransom cases and widespread drug abuse a few years ago.

No kidnapper or drug lord has so far been executed, however.

Two years ago, the President stated her policy on giving pardon by saying: "If they're not drug lords or kidnappers, and they are more than 70 years old, just recommend it to me and I assure you [I will] grant them my presidential pardon," the President said in previous statements.

The President had lamented the failure of the penal system to reform criminals, noting that some kidnap leaders and drug lords continue to run their nefarious operations even within the confines of their maximum-security cells.

"It's as if the penal system is not rehabilitating them. (But) we have to give them a lesson. And after that, maybe that's the time that we could go back to the policy of no executions," the President explained in a statement two years ago.

But with the police making inroads in its antikidnapping and anti-drug trafficking campaign in the past few years, the President has apparently toned down her position on the death penalty. "You know, given our conditions in jail, that is a fate worse than death if they stay forever," the President said.

Knights of Columbus to mark centenary

THIS year, the Knights of Columbus, the worldwide service-oriented civic organization of Catholic gentlemen, is marking the centenary of its establishment in the Philippines.

Hosted by the Luzon Jurisdiction led by State Deputy Rodolfo C. Magsino, the year-long celebration will be highlighted by a tri-state convention to be held at the Manila Hotel on March 13-20. Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson is expected to attend.

A hundred years after its birth in the Philippines, the Knights of Columbus has grown into a dynamic service group spearheading activities for the betterment of the youth, family and church, and initiating community-oriented programs.

From the lone Philippine Jurisdiction, there are now Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao Jurisdictions, each headed by a state deputy.

Recently, the organization mobilized councils to channel relief operations and humanitarian aid to the families displaced by the storms that hit Eastern Luzon late last year. The project was in keeping with the organization's traditional "Keeping Christ in Christmas" program.

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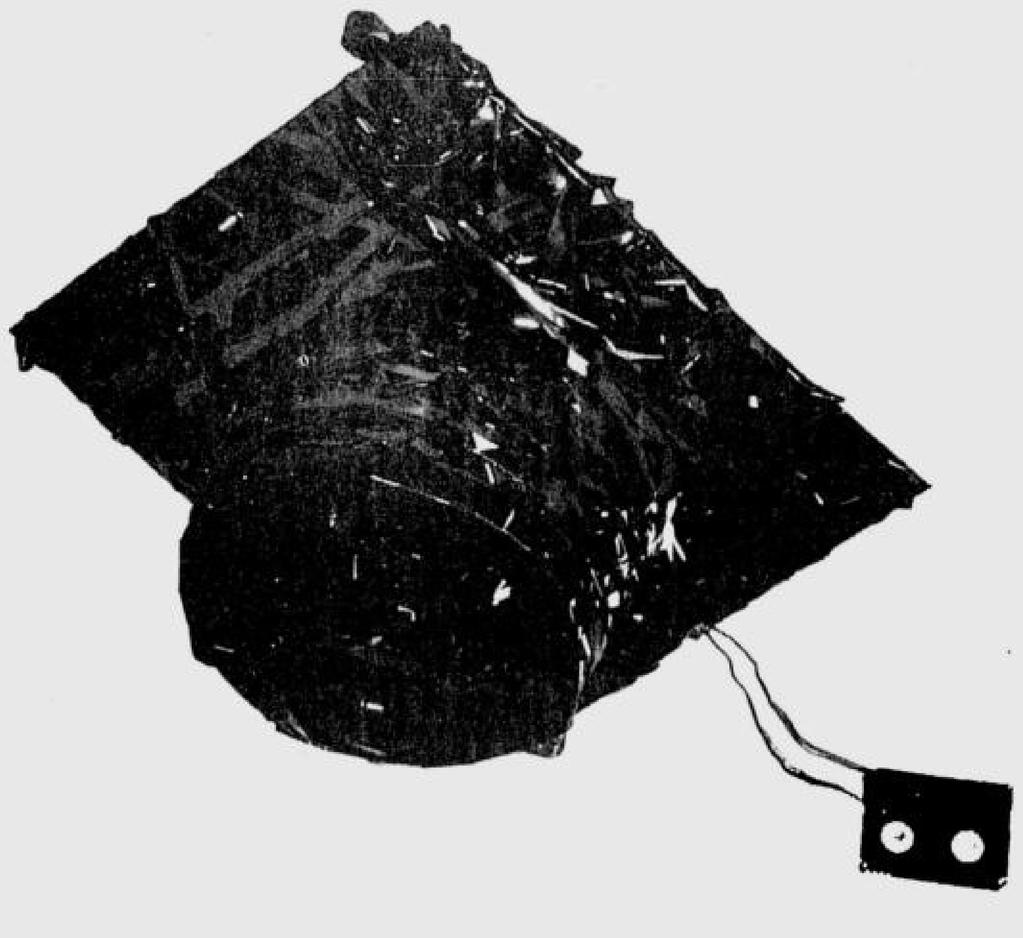
The House worked overtime from Wednesday evening to 1 a.m. yesterday to adopt amendments to House Bill No. 3705, a measure providing for the lifting, coverage and reduction of VAT.

All bread products are currently levied a 10-percent VAT but this will soon increase to 12 percent once the 20-percent VAT increase becomes law. *Carlito Pablo*



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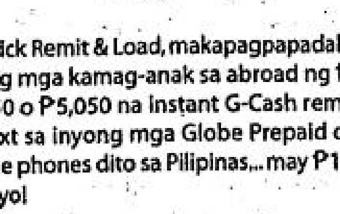

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'They are not recycled'

From page A1

to the three bombings," he said.

Rafanan's admission meant that so far, only two men—Gamal "Tapay" Baharan and Angelo Trinidad—had been arrested in connection with the bombings that killed eight people and wounded at least 150 others in the cities of Makati, Davao and General Santos.

Public confession

In an interview with ABS-CBN television last night, Trinidad broke down as he admitted planting and triggering the bomb that exploded inside a passenger bus in Makati.

"I cannot deny it in front of you, and in front of God I cannot deny it. It is clear that I was the one who did it," he said.

The report said he also admitted belonging to the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf group.

Trinidad said that Abu Solaiman, a senior Abu Sayyaf leader, told him on Feb. 12 to assemble a bomb, then ordered him to plant it inside a bus.

Trinidad said another bus originally was targeted.

"When I looked at the back (of the bus), I saw a child, a baby around 6 months old carried by its father. I told myself I could not go through with this," he recalled, tears welling in his eyes.

He said he got off that bus and approached another.

"I then picked a bus that did not have many passengers," he added. "I placed the bomb at the back and when we reached Ayala (Avenue), we got off. Then we boarded another bus and he said 'detonate it.'"

It was not clear whether "he" referred to Solaiman or Baharan.

Trinidad said he got the bomb-making materials from a cohort he identified only as Maidan, and that assembly took five hours.

Can't prevent everything

To the question of how the purported planners managed to pull off the near-simultaneous bomb attacks despite being behind bars, Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes said: "We cannot prevent everything. We cannot assure [the public] that we can catch everybody."

The PNP intelligence chief, Director Robert Delfin, had his own explanation: "When you arrest one unit, there's still the possibility that another unit will do the same job."

Rafanan said the four men were in fact arrested for their alleged plot to bomb at least five targets in Metro Manila and Mindanao during the Christmas season.

Among the targets were shopping malls and American soldiers participating in the RP-US Balikatan exercises, he said.

"Before they could do their thing, they were picked up in our ports," said PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay. "So that means that compared with other countries in our region, we have a better way of monitoring [terrorists] and limiting their capability."

Reyes lamented that despite the evidence purportedly seized from the four men, police could charge them only with illegal possession of firearms and explosives and violating immigration laws.

"Ideally, we should be able to charge them with conspiracy to commit terrorism, but because of the lack of an antiterrorism law, we have to charge them only with violation of the Revised Penal Code," Reyes said.

$7,000 in cash

Rafanan said that as early as last Dec. 14, local authorities, in coordination with their foreign counterparts, had monitored the arrival of Hamid, Faiz and Yolanda from Sulawesi (Indonesia) and Sandakan (Malaysia).

He said that two days later at around 3 p.m., intelligence operatives arrested the three along with De la Merced soon after they arrived at the Zamboanga City port.

De la Merced was to serve as the "guide" of the others on their way to Camp Hudaibiya in Maguindanao, Rafanan claimed. The group was supposed to train local recruits in bomb-making.

Rafanan said two pistols, cellular phones, terrorist training books and substances and equipment used in bomb-making were seized from the group.

He said the loot also included the amount of $7,000, allegedly to be used for five separate bombings, and a video supposed to be shown to the recruits in Camp Hudaibiya.

The video, showing the Saudi-born Osama bin Laden inviting recruits to join the international terrorist effort, "clearly shows the connection between the JI and Bin Laden's al-Qaida network," Rafanan told reporters who were asked to view the footage.

Rafanan described Hamid, Faiz and Yolanda as "top-level" JI members involved in distributing funds and training recruits in the Philippines.

Delfin said it was the JI that was coordinating terrorists' local efforts among the Abu Sayyaf, a group of Islamic converts, and renegade members of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"The JI does not operate here alone," Delfin said. "It taps local terrorists for a job."

At the time of their arrest, Hamid and company were supposed to train local recruits in making powerful explosives such as "helmet" bombs, "body" bombs and car bombs, Rafanan said.

"It's quite alarming because they have reached that level," he said.

Preemptive strikes

In a hastily called press conference hours before the four men were presented to the media, Ms Arroyo lauded the military and police for the "consistent success in the antiterrorism campaign."

In a speech at the oath-taking of 47 generals immediately preceding the press conference, she ordered the launch of "preemptive strikes" to prevent "borderless" terror groups from inflicting harm and sowing mayhem.

"It is time to bring the issue to a higher plane of preemptive security," the President told the generals, including Gen. Efren Abu, the Armed Forces chief of staff, who now has four stars.

The oath-taking was coupled with the presentation of Metrobank's The Outstanding Philippine Soldiers 2004 in Malacañang's Rizal Hall.

According to the President, "the perimeters of vigilance must be strengthened by stronger laws to identify, pinpoint and expose terrorists and to enable authorities to neutralize terrorist conspiracies before they can strike."

She said public safety was a component of economic progress as much as political stability.

"Our efforts to ensure national security goes hand-in-hand with the efforts designed to grow the economy and mop up the recruiting grounds of terrorists and lawless elements," she added.

Malacañang wants an Internal Security Act to contain terrorism, including the establishment of a national identification system.

The President congratulated the uniformed services "for their string of successes in the past few days and weeks."

She particularly commended the Intelligence Service of the AFP for the information that led to the arrests.

At Camp Aguinaldo, Lt. Gen. Allan Cabalquinto, chief of the AFP's National Region Command (NCRCom), told reporters that some 10 more members of the Abu Sayyaf were "lying low" in Metro Manila and being tracked by security forces.

"It's not a big force but we are closely watching, monitoring, their possible hiding places," he said. "We cannot discount suspicion that they are up [to something]."

Cabalquinto assured the public that there was no immediate threat of a terrorist attack in Metro Manila.

"... But our chokepoints and checkpoints and walk-the-beat patrols are continuing, especially at night," he said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Alcuin Papa*

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ARMM 'Abu' ...

From page A1

Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Under the Muslim Mindanao Act No. 162 or the "Magna Carta for Muslim Children," all Muslim fathers shall be called "Abu" (father of) plus the name of his first child, triggering fears that the name bearers could be mistaken for terrorists.

Moreover, the law, which was passed by the Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA) last December, requires newborns to adopt the names of their fathers as their surname.

The idea was adopted from a "Koranic injunction" that says "call thy children by the name of their fathers," Basilan Assemblywoman Rajam Akbar quoted the authors of the law as saying.

Arab people who follow the same tradition put the word "ibnu" or "ibni" (child of) in between the child's name and the father's name, and the word "abu" (father of) before the child's name when referring to the father.

For instance, any Muslim father who chooses Sulayman for a first-born's name would be called "Abu Sulayman."

A Muslim father bearing that name would be in a very uneasy position, according to critics of the law, because his name would be similar to the *nom de guerre* used by the self-styled spokesperson of the Abu Sayyaf, a bandit group linked to the terrorist network of al-Qaida.

During a conference here on Wednesday among those opposing the law, parents said in a statement that the Magna Carta might trigger more abuses against Muslims during crackdowns against terrorists.

Contrary to tradition

"Would this mean that Muslim fathers will now be called with an Abu only for their rights to be ABUsed whenever authorities conduct antiterror raids on Muslim communities?" they read.

Datu Amir Baraguir, the sultan of Maguindanao, said adopting the law might be contrary to the tradition of local Muslims.

"The practice of adopting Abu only began recently and was popularized by the so-called terrorists," he said.

"People from the ARMM sporting names that start with Abu maybe unduly subjected to suspicion when they travel to other places," Baraguir said.

He urged the authors of the nomenclature law to restudy it and consider its "possible adverse effects" to ARMM residents, particularly Muslim fathers.

Razulden Mangelen, acting director of the National Statistics Office in the region, said the law applied to birth registration for newborns as an option for their parents, and not an unwitting imposition on the child.

"It allows their parents (to do so)," he said, "but it does not impose on them the use of their fathers' names" for a surname.

Commando Pilimpinas, NSO-ARMM director, said his office supported the passage of the measure as part of the implementation of the National Birth Registration Project in the region.

Islamic rights

In a press briefing on Wednesday, Iskak Pasawilan, NSP senior project coordinator, said the project aimed to lobby to the RLA and the local legislative bodies for the passage of more laws concurring with the United Nations policy standards on the rights of children.

But some sectors, among them lawyers and ulama (scholars), said the regional law seemed to have overlooked many other Islamic rights, if its purpose were to pass a law distinctive of Muslims.

The Muslim Mindanao Act No. 162 does not include one basic right of male Muslim child stated in the Koran—circumcision, according to one critic.

"That may be a religious call on the parents to do so, but any secular law might be imposing on the child something that he could not understand yet, and that's what would make it unconstitutional on the first count; secondly, it could be deemed a class legislation, if it were in Congress," said Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong, a former justice secretary. *With a report from Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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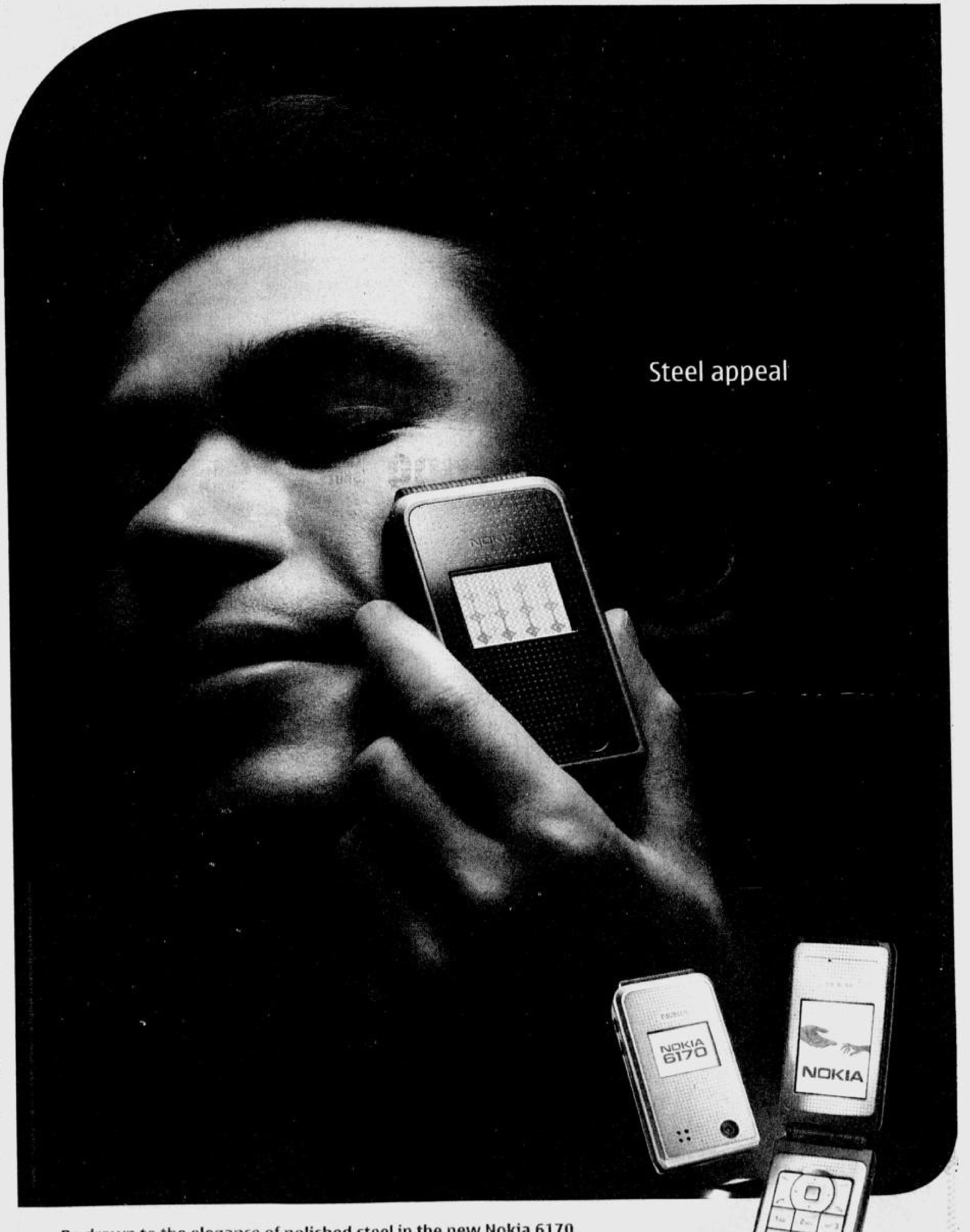

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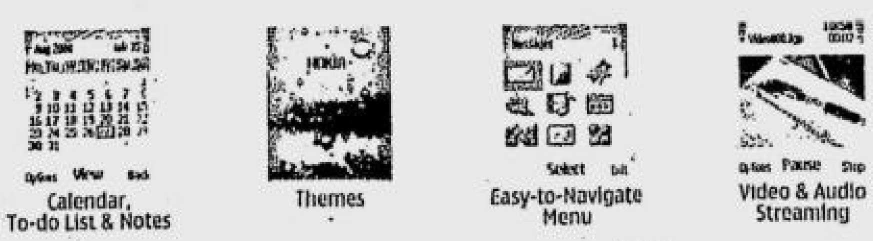

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Many Pinoy workers lose jobs in Saipan

SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands—More than 1,000 foreign workers, including Filipinos, have lost their jobs in Northern Mariana Islands clothing factories as a rise in Chinese clothing exports to the United States leads to orders being slashed for firms based in the US territory, government figures show.

The problem is expected to worsen and this week the Northern Marianas Attorney General's Office said laid-off foreign workers in the local garment industry would be repatriated to their home countries if they failed to find jobs in other factories.

The local garment industry, accused by labor activists of creating sweatshop conditions, has seen a fall in orders since global quotas for textiles expired at the beginning of this year. The removal of quotas has allowed major exporters, especially China, to increase shipments to the United States.

Ironically, most of the affected workers in the Northern Marianas are Chinese, with a large number from the Philippines also losing their jobs. The industry is centered on Saipan, the principal island in the 14-island chain which lies east of the Philippines in the northern Pacific Ocean.

Records from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Labor released Wednesday showed 1,116 of the estimated 31,000 foreign workers on the islands are jobless. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 25, 2005
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Gen 37:3-4,12-13,17-28
Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43,45-46

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders, "Listen to another example: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress, built a watchtower, leased the vineyard to tenants and then went to a distant country. When harvest time came, the landowner sent his servants to the tenants to collect his share of the harvest. But the tenants seized his servants, beat one, killed another and stoned another.

Again the owner sent more servants, but they were treated in the same way.

Finally, he sent his son, thinking: 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they thought: 'This is the one who is to inherit the vineyard. Let us kill him and his inheritance will be ours.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do with the tenants when he comes?" They said to him, "He will bring those evil to an evil end, and lease the vineyard to others who will pay him in due time."

And Jesus replied, "Have you never read what the Scriptures say? The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; and we marvel at it. Therefore I say to you: the kingdom of heaven will be taken from you and given to people who will yield a harvest.

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these parables, they realized that Jesus was referring to them. They would have arrested him, but they were afraid of the crowd who regarded him as a prophet.

Commentary

Joseph is best loved of his brothers and they in jealousy and rage, plot to kill him and throw him in a well, then sell him to traders because of Ruben's pleading not to kill him. Our ancestors are just like us. We are people of intrigue, hate, jealousy, anger and murder. And Jesus reminds the people around him with the parable of the tenants who have been entrusted with a vineyard but they take the wine and then refuse to give what is due the vineyard owner. Again and again when servants are sent (prophets) to demand justice, they are seized, treated harshly and killed. Then the son is sent and they kill him. But the time of judgment will come. Jesus will be rejected. He was rejected. He is still rejected by nations and many who claim to be his followers (tenants) but justice will be done and the harvest will be reaped by those who hear the Word of God and take it to heart. Lord Jesus, let us be the ones who honor your Word, your kingdom and your will in the world and do not let us be the ones judged justly. Amen.

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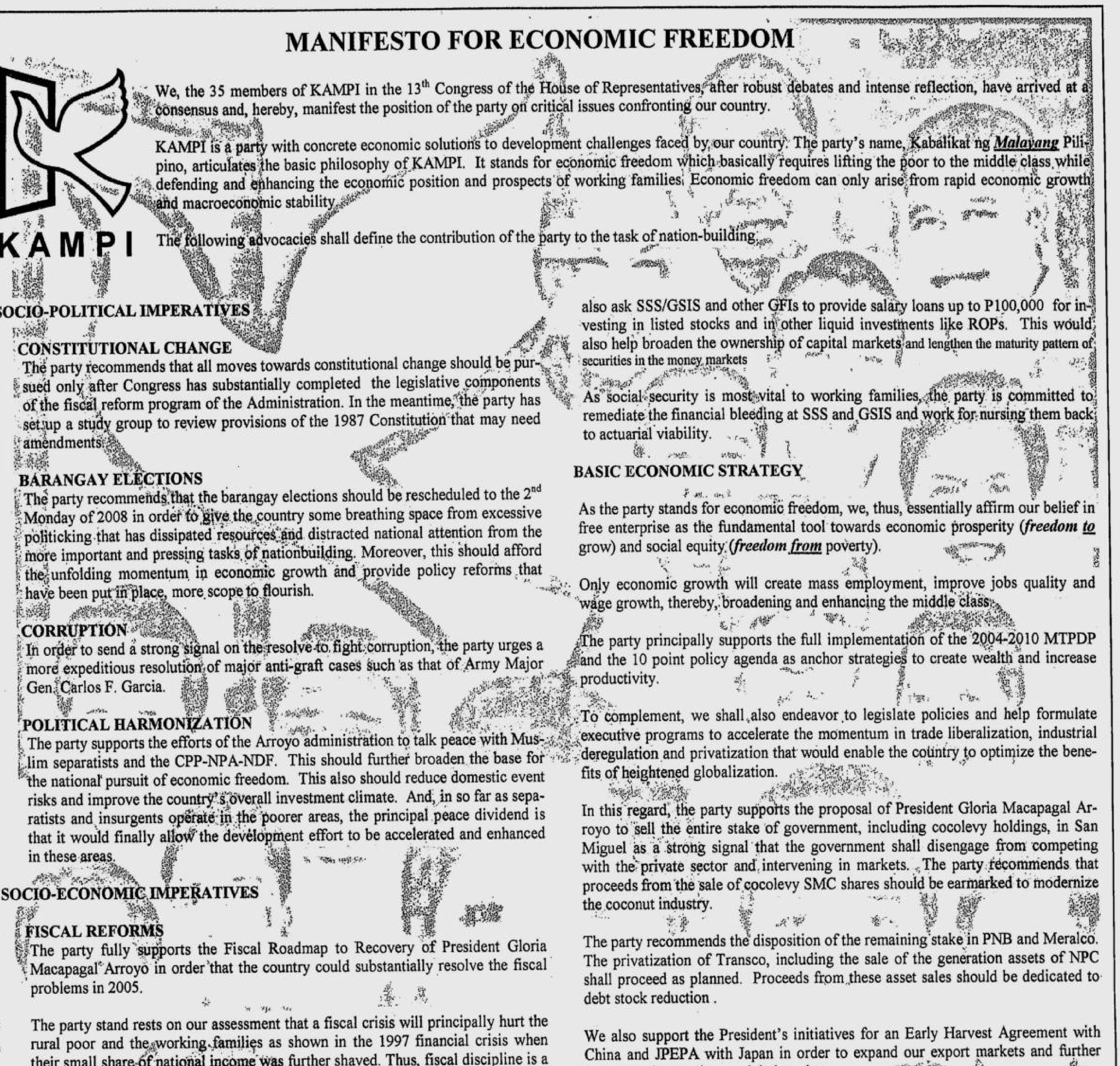

KAMPI

We, the 35 members of KAMPI in the 13th Congress of the House of Representatives, after robust debates and intense reflection, have arrived at a consensus and, hereby, manifest the position of the party on critical issues confronting our country.

KAMPI is a party with concrete economic solutions to development challenges faced by our country. The party's name, Kabalikat ng ***Malayang*** Pilipino, articulates the basic philosophy of KAMPI. It stands for economic freedom which basically requires lifting the poor to the middle class while defending and enhancing the economic position and prospects of working families. Economic freedom can only arise from rapid economic growth and macroeconomic stability.

The following advocacies shall define the contribution of the party to the task of nation-building.

SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPERATIVES

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

The party recommends that all moves towards constitutional change should be pursued only after Congress has substantially completed the legislative components of the fiscal reform program of the Administration. In the meantime, the party has set up a study group to review provisions of the 1987 Constitution that may need amendments.

BARANGAY ELECTIONS

The party recommends that the barangay elections should be rescheduled to the 2nd Monday of 2008 in order to give the country some breathing space from excessive politicking that has dissipated resources and distracted national attention from the more important and pressing tasks of nationbuilding. Moreover, this should afford the unfolding momentum in economic growth and provide policy reforms that have been put in place, more scope to flourish.

CORRUPTION

In order to send a strong signal on the resolve to fight corruption, the party urges a more expeditious resolution of major anti-graft cases such as that of Army Major Gen. Carlos F. Garcia.

POLITICAL HARMONIZATION

The party supports the efforts of the Arroyo administration to talk peace with Muslim separatists and the CPP-NPA-NDF. This should further broaden the base for the national pursuit of economic freedom. This also should reduce domestic event risks and improve the country's overall investment climate. And, in so far as separatists and insurgents operate in the poorer areas, the principal peace dividend is that it would finally allow the development effort to be accelerated and enhanced in these areas.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES

FISCAL REFORMS

The party fully supports the Fiscal Roadmap to Recovery of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in order that the country could substantially resolve the fiscal problems in 2005.

The party stand rests on our assessment that a fiscal crisis will principally hurt the rural poor and the working families as shown in the 1997 financial crisis when their small share of national income was further shaved. Thus, fiscal discipline is a necessary first step to economic development.

KAMPI commits itself to the approval of revenue measures, particularly the lifting of VAT exemptions, except in basic commodities and the hiking of VAT rate from 10 to 12%. With respect to EVAT, a uniform rate should be imposed in order to reduce potential leakages and improve tax collection efficiency.

DEFENDING AND ADVANCING THE WELFARE OF WORKING FAMILIES

The burden of fiscal reforms is principally borne by Filipino working families. Thus, safety nets should be built into the roadmap in order to mitigate the impact of higher duties and taxes on top of high oil prices. These include:

Continuation of diesel discounts to urban transports;

Adoption of a voucher system for provincial tricycle groups;

Enhancement and enforcement of lifeline rates in the Meralco franchise area and the condonation of NEA loans to countryside electric cooperatives.

Moreover, we support the continuing exemption of cooperatives from EVAT coverage.

Furthermore, resources freed up from pursuing fiscal reforms should be prioritized for social services such as health and education and for infrastructure.

As the fiscal situation improves, the party is committed to provide tax relief for Filipino working families as just reward of the sacrifices they endured to solve the fiscal crisis.

Thus, the party is committed to improve the current tax collection system which enables the rich to escape the tax net with non-corporate business sector paying only P12bn per year while wage earners are withheld P84bn.

Moreover, we are committed to reform the current tax structure in order to skillfully shift the tax burden from the middle class to the rich.

Moreover, the party shall devise programs that would help them accumulate capital. The party shall work for the approval of the PERA accounts bill. We shall also ask SSS/GSIS and other GFIs to provide salary loans up to P100,000 for investing in listed stocks and in other liquid investments like ROPs. This would also help broaden the ownership of capital markets and lengthen the maturity pattern of securities in the money markets

As social security is most vital to working families, the party is committed to remediate the financial bleeding at SSS and GSIS and work for nursing them back to actuarial viability.

BASIC ECONOMIC STRATEGY

As the party stands for economic freedom, we, thus, essentially affirm our belief in free enterprise as the fundamental tool towards economic prosperity (***freedom to*** grow) and social equity (***freedom from*** poverty).

Only economic growth will create mass employment, improve jobs quality and wage growth, thereby, broadening and enhancing the middle class.

The party principally supports the full implementation of the 2004-2010 MTPDP and the 10 point policy agenda as anchor strategies to create wealth and increase productivity.

To complement, we shall also endeavor to legislate policies and help formulate executive programs to accelerate the momentum in trade liberalization, industrial deregulation and privatization that would enable the country to optimize the benefits of heightened globalization.

In this regard, the party supports the proposal of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to sell the entire stake of government, including cocolevy holdings, in San Miguel as a strong signal that the government shall disengage from competing with the private sector and intervening in markets. The party recommends that proceeds from the sale of cocolevy SMC shares should be earmarked to modernize the coconut industry.

The party recommends the disposition of the remaining stake in PNB and Meralco. The privatization of Transco, including the sale of the generation assets of NPC shall proceed as planned. Proceeds from these asset sales should be dedicated to debt stock reduction .

We also support the President's initiatives for an Early Harvest Agreement with China and JPEPA with Japan in order to expand our export markets and further hasten our integration to global markets.

In particular, given our historically low savings rate, the party gives appropriate importance to the role of foreign investments in harnessing the country's comparative advantages that would propel rapid economic growth which would help us achieve the reduction of poverty from 28% to 18% as targeted in the new MTPDP of the Arroyo administration.

KAMPINOMICS: BARANGAY AS A BASIC ECONOMIC UNIT

The party believes in the barangay not just as a basic political unit but as an instrument for economic freedom. This is the flagship of KAMPINOMICS. KAMPI is initiating an aggressive program to build up economic enterprise units at the barangay level. As a first step, it shall work for the programming of P1m per barangay and shall help find the P44bn funding for such program. This shall be rolled out over 3 years at P15bn p.a. with priority given to poorer barangays.

The party recommends the adoption of strategies that would promote self-sustaining programs. Such programs should help the rural poor graduate to the middle class by promoting profitable farming, fishery projects, agro-industrial endeavors, rural and urban entrepreneurship.

Thus, KAMPI also means Kabuhayan ng Mamamayang Pilipino.

Given the difficult challenges to achieving the foregoing party tasks, KAMPI shall endeavor to build party discipline in the spirit of *pagkakaisa* which would project and employ its strength as a major voting bloc in Congress. We shall build and nurture alliances and coalitions in order to leverage such strength needed to secure the success of the reform program of the administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the next six years.

Adopted on 19 February 2005, Mimosa Holiday Inn, Clark, Pampanga

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US discovery may lead to AIDS vaccine

BOSTON, Massachusetts—US scientists announced Wednesday the discovery of a key element in the workings of HIV, the virus which causes AIDS, which could eventually lead to the creation of effective vaccines against the virus.

The discovery, presented at the 12th annual Conference on Retrovirus and Opportunistic Infections in Boston, and simultaneously published in newest issue of the British journal Nature, shows how HIV mutates its form, in turn provoking changes which permit it to enter cells.

The study was done at the Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School by Stephen Harrison, head of a research team at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

The scientists were able to obtain a three-dimensional image of the protein gp120, an element of the HIV membrane, before it metamorphoses itself and attaches to a cell's CD4 receptors.

Once the protein attaches to the receptors, HIV is able to penetrate the cell's interior and reproduce, explained one of the scientists.

The scientists said understanding gp120's form alterations before the attack on cells could lead to the creation of new vaccines to stall HIV infections.

"Knowing how gp120 changes shape is a new route to inhibiting HIV by using compounds that inhibit the shape change," said Harrison.

"The findings also will help us understand why it's so hard to make an HIV vaccine, and will help us start strategizing about new approaches to vaccine development."

In the absence of vaccines to prevent infections, the AIDS pandemic has struck 39 million people around the world. More than three million died in 2004.

As with the discovery announced by Harrison, much of the Boston conference focused on the most promising area of AIDS research, vaccine treatments that stimulate the body at the cellular level into defending itself.

The treatments produce antibodies in the blood to neutralize the virus before it penetrates cells, and stimulate an immune reaction against HIV from inside the cell.

In one promising development last year, scientists discovered a protein, TRIM5-alpha, which can block HIV from entering the cell. The protein, whose existence has been long suspected, was discovered during studies of monkeys who could not be infected with the AIDS virus.

Yet another protein, the enzyme APODEC, was shown to interrupt HIV's ability to reproduce genetically once it has entered a cell, effectively preventing its multiplication.

While such cellular vaccines are promising, real prevention against an HIV assault requires stimulating the immune system to produce antibodies capable of hunting and destroying the virus before it enters cells, said Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health.

"A safe and effective HIV vaccine is critical to the control of HIV globally, and is the most important and difffficult scientific challenge facing AIDS researchers today," said Fauci. *AFP*

HIV-positive Indian boy kicked out of school

GUWAHATI, India—A 4-year-old HIV-positive boy has been kicked out of school in India's northeastern state of Assam under pressure from the parents of his classmates, a rights group said Thursday.

The Assam Network of Positive People (ANPP) said it had appealed to the Assam Human Rights Commission to intervene on behalf of the boy.

"This is nothing but a serious crime to have thrown out a little boy from school just because he is HIV-positive," ANPP leader Jahnabi Goswami, who is herself HIV-positive, said.

According to the principal of Sishu Niketan primary school, in the industrial town of Namrup in eastern Assam, some parents had threatened to take their children out of class if the infected boy was allowed to stay.

The parents of the boy had tested HIV-positive five years ago but kept it a secret. When news leaked out, they were ostracized by members of their community.

After the boy was barred from classes, they moved to Assam's main city of Guwahati where they are undergoing treatment at a city hospital.

In a similar incident two HIV-positive children were thrown out of school in the southern Indian state of Kerala in 2003 after parents of other students protested.

Government figures put the number of people living with HIV-AIDS in India at 5.1 million— second only to South Africa—although health workers say the number is much higher. *AFP*

Bush turns up heat on Syria

BEIRUT—US President George W. Bush demanded on Wednesday that Syria pull its security services as well as its army out of Lebanon, echoing France's remarks that Syrian intelligence controlled the country.

But Bush said that before seeking UN sanctions, Washington would see how Syria responded to international clamor for it to quit Lebanon, which has grown louder since a massive bomb killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri last week.

"We will see how they (the Syrians) respond before there are any further discussions about going back to the United Nations," Bush told a news conference with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in Mainz, Germany.

In Beirut opposition deputies, riding high on mass protests against Hariri's killing over the past week, piled on the pressure, saying they would try to topple the Syrian-backed government in parliament and calling for a one-day national strike next week.

"Opposition MPs confirm that they will seek a no-confidence vote in the government during (the Feb. 28) general assembly meeting" called to discuss the assassination, they said in a statement after a meeting of 38 MPs. *Reuters*

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Prince Charles 'happy' without Queen Elizabeth at his wedding

LONDON—Britain's heir to the throne Prince Charles on Wednesday brushed off his mother Queen Elizabeth II's plans to miss his wedding, denying it was a snub to the union with his divorced lover.

The queen declined Tuesday to attend her son's April 8 civil marriage ceremony with his longtime companion Camilla Parker Bowles at Windsor town hall in deference to their wishes for a "low-key" event.

However, royal watchers in the British media called her planned absence a monumental snub, seeing it as the latest misstep in wedding plans announced only two weeks ago.

The couple have also had to revise their plans to wed in Windsor Castle and have now switched to the local town hall, prompting some observers to say the queen felt the venue was unfit for royalty.

A spokesperson for Clarence House, Charles' office, on Wednesday followed the line given by Buckingham Palace, the queen's official residence in London.

"The civil ceremony was always meant to be low-key," the spokesperson said.

When asked whether the 56-year-old prince viewed his mother's absence as a snub, the spokesperson added: "No. They've discussed it and the prince is happy with the arrangements."

A Buckingham Palace spokesperson said the queen would still attend a subsequent blessing and prayer service after the wedding, led by the head of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

The spokesperson said "the queen is attending the service of dedication and paying for the reception—this is not a snub."

Prince Charles' sons princes William and Harry, along with Parker Bowles' children, will be present to watch the couple wed in Windsor's Guildhall.

Clarence House said Charles' sons might be asked to be official witnesses.

The queen's presence could have boosted the popularity of Parker Bowles, 57, who was widely seen as a major cause of the breakup of Charles' first marriage to the late Princess Diana.

Diana died in a car crash in 1997 but has remained hugely popular.

The Daily Mirror reported Wednesday that Charles' father Prince Philip, his brothers princes Andrew and Edward and sister Princess Anne also would stay away.

Sources close to the royal family would not confirm their presence either, saying the list of guests had not been finalized yet.

Charles and Parker Bowles, who have known each other for more than 30 years and dated on and off, cannot marry in a church ceremony because they have both been previously married and divorced. *AFP*

BATHROOM THRONE
Picture taken in Hong Kong Feb. 24 shows a solid gold and gem-encrusted toilet valued at 38,000,000 million Hong Kong dollars (US$4.8 million). The Hong Kong tourism board has removed the gold jewelry store that displays the toilet from its preferred list after staff were rude to customers. AFP

Nepal editors in trouble for saying nothing

KATMANDU—Four Nepalese editors were to be grilled by officials for a second day Thursday after they left blank spaces in their newspapers following King Gyanendra's ban on comment against his power grab, one of them said.

The editors were questioned Wednesday by officials from the Chief District Office, a powerful body in charge of all security issues in the Kathmandu Valley.

However there had not been enough time to complete the questioning and they had been asked to return, said Gopal Budhathoki, editor of the weekly Sanghu (Bridge).

The editors have been asked to explain why they left blank spaces on the pages where they normally publish editorial comment.

The editor of the weekly Bimarsha (Opinion), Rajendra Baidhya, told the officials on Wednesday he had left spaces blank in his newspaper "as he could not find appropriate matter to publish," Budhathoki said.

The king, who sacked the coalition government, assumed absolute power and declared emergency rule on Feb. 1, issued a proclamation prohibiting for six months "any interview, article, news, notice, view or personal opinion" against his actions.

Six journalists have been put in detention since the king's takeover, including Federation of Nepalese Journalists general secretary Bishnu Nisthuri.

Budhathoki said that Chief District Officer Baman Prasad Neupane, who had led Wednesday's questioning, had assured the editors that no action would be taken against them. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Pope back in hospital

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul returned to hospital on Thursday with a relapse of the flu, his second stay in hospital this month, a Vatican statement said. The Pope, 84 and in frail health for several years, was taken to Rome's Gemelli hospital for "specialist treatment and further checks," the Vatican said. He spent 10 days in the Gemelli earlier this month after suffering an acute breathing problem brought on by a bout of influenza. He returned home on Feb. 10 and the Vatican had previously said he was making a steady recovery. The Pope held a "virtual" general audience on Wednesday, addressing thousands of pilgrims via a television link from his private study. He was to have appeared at his window to bless crowds in St Peter's Square, but a rainstorm in Rome forced organizers to move people indoors to an audience hall equipped with large television screens. He was seen speaking in a hoarse voice but otherwise looking fairly well, he read a three-paragraph address and then greeted the pilgrims in six languages, including his native Polish. The virtual audience on Wednesday lasted 25 minutes. Regular general audiences, held weekly, can last up to 90 minutes. *Reuters*

Iraq car bomb kills 15

TIKRIT, Iraq—A man wearing a police uniform drove a car bomb inside the headquarters of police in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit on Thursday, setting off a massive explosion that killed at least 15 police and wounded 22 others, police and witnesses said. Police said the attacker was able to slip into the station undetected because he was wearing a police lieutenant's uniform. They blamed guards at the station's gates for allowing the bomber to enter without checking his papers or searching his vehicle. *AP*

Iran quake toll reaches 500

HOUTKAN, Iran—Around 500 people are known to have died in the Iran earthquake, officials said Thursday, but the toll could be higher as rescuers continued to dig frantically through the rubble of flattened mountain villages. The governor of the stricken Kerman province said 490 people had been killed and 900 injured when the 6.4 magnitude quake struck Tuesday, turning whole villages to rubble in mountainous regions. *AFP*

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Portrait of Filipino courage gone from US Army museum

From page A1

cisco, California.

Retired Lt. Col. Gustavo Ingles, former commander of the guerrilla unit Hunters-ROTC, said Filipino war veterans now based in California told him the sad story a few months ago.

He said the war veterans discovered the removal of the painting when they visited the Presidio, formerly a premier US Army installation in the West Coast, in San Francisco.

Ingles, now 84, said it was still unclear why the museum officials decided to take away the painting.

Sensitive

He, however, said the Filipino veterans told him that a possible reason could be the sensitive subject of the painting.

"[It] showed Filipino guerrillas attacking a Japanese post here in Los Baños even before the American paratroopers landed on the grounds. But why did they remove it? The US-based veterans said the Americans could have complained that they were not there when the guerrillas arrived," Ingles told the INQUIRER.

Ingles, former president of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines, later showed a black and white photocopy of the painting.

A colored version was included inside a leaflet distributed before the ceremonies on Wednesday commemorating the raid on Los Baños that liberated civilian prisoners, including Americans and Filipinos.

"It should be returned so that the gallantry of the guerrillas during the war against the Japanese would be seen again," he said.

What's in portrait

The painting shows a guerrilla attacking a Japanese soldier with a bolo just outside the interment camps in Los Baños.

Four other guerrillas are seen hiding in the bushes near the detachment. In the background are warplanes dropping American parachutists who later cleared the entire camp where the Japanese kept all their prisoners.

Ingles said he has forgotten the name of the American painter, who was commissioned by the US Army to make a painting on the Los Baños raid of Feb. 23, 1945.

"The museum has paintings which showed all the great wars that the Americans engaged in. And the Los Baños raid is one of them," he said.

Hunters guerrillas' mission

Then a 24-year-old lieutenant, Ingles headed the Hunters-ROTC guerrillas, a group of former cadets of the Philippine Military Academy and ROTC trainees, as ground commander.

Their mission was to save the 2,147 civilian prisoners from the Philippines, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, France and Italy.

Most of them had been incarcerated since 1942 inside the Baker Hall, a gymnasium-turned-interment camp inside the then Philippine Agricultural College, now the University of the Philippines at Los Baños.

Mayor Caesar Perez said Ingles' group, President Quezon's Own Guerrillas, Red Lion's Unit, the Filipino-Chinese 48th Squadron and the Villegas group of the Hukbalahaps were the ones who engaged Japanese soldiers in a fierce battle.

Joint effort

"After the guerillas cleared the area, American paratroopers came to finish off the enemies. So it was really an effort of both the American and Filipino forces. But the Filipinos were the first to attack," Perez said.

They later transported the prisoners on board amphibian tractors across Laguna Lake and into American lines.

Misconceptions

Rev. Ken Fuller, then the head of the 511th PIR, said he had no knowledge about the missing painting.

But he said if the story was true, the painting deserves to be back where it should belong.

He said the painting should somehow clear some misconceptions that Filipino guerrillas withdrew at the height of the raid.

He added, "Filipinos were not cowards. They were courageous and great fighters. They deserve to be dignified."

US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, who also visited the site of the raid, refused to comment on the issue as, until Ingles' disclosure, he had been unaware of the missing painting.

Thanks veterans

In his speech, Ricciardone said the commemoration of the successful raid must remind the governments of the United States and the Philippines to reaffirm their alliances.

"We thank the veterans for their bravery and for keeping the faith. We should draw strength and inspiration from them. We should likewise rededicate ourselves and promise our grandparents that we'll pay it forward," he said.

Suzette . . .

From page A1

tor General Edgar Aglipay yesterday could not say why he offered security to Huang soon after she tried to kill herself on Wednesday.

At a press conference, Aglipay described the security as "double edged" but did not elaborate.

Asked if the suicide attempt could be an indication of guilt, Aglipay said: "The act can further strengthen our investigation."

Amid the controversy surrounding Huang, what appears clear is that the PNP cannot "hold" her.

"Right now, the Department of Justice is investigating and trying to get hold of her so her statement can be taken and appropriate charges can be filed against her," Aglipay told reporters.

The PNP chief said police could not just arrest Huang even if other suspects detained at Camp Crame had purportedly tagged her as the mastermind.

The "hot pursuit" principle that the PNP had applied in arresting Roldan on Feb. 20 apparently could not be used on Huang.

Roldan was arrested at his Filinvest II home in Quezon City soon after the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) team had seized other alleged members of his kidnap-for-ransom gang in a Cubao apartment the night before, according to Aglipay.

Preliminary investigation

In Huang's case, she has to go through regular preliminary investigation, the PNP chief said.

If government prosecutors find prima facie evidence against Huang, criminal charges will be filed against her before a court which will then issue an arrest warrant against her.

Aglipay on Wednesday ordered PNP lawyers to subpoena Huang. Nothing came out of the order and he was singing a different tune yesterday.

"What we're doing is we're inviting her for questioning," he said. "At this point, she is not physically capable of going through the investigation."

2 accomplices

Two of the alleged accomplices of Roldan and Huang are on the Central Police District (CPD) watch list.

Chief Insp. Rodolfo Jaraza, head of the CPD-District Police Intelligence Unit, said Adrian Domingo and Albert Pagdanganan, both of Kapalangan, Pampanga, had been linked to a series of car theft in Quezon City before they were arrested last week.

Jaraza said that while CPD was tracking Domingo and Pagdanganan in connection with certain car theft cases, police stumbled on reports that the two were into kidnapping.

It was gathered that after members of Pacer busted the alleged kidnap group, police recovered four vehicles during follow-up operations.

Recovered were a Toyota Corolla registered under the name Mitchell Gumabao, Roldan's real name; an unregistered Nissan Sentra Super Salon; a Mitsubishi Lancer registered to Arbolle Rosario; and an Isuzu cab registered under the name of one Advento Hernando. *With a report from Tina G. Santos*

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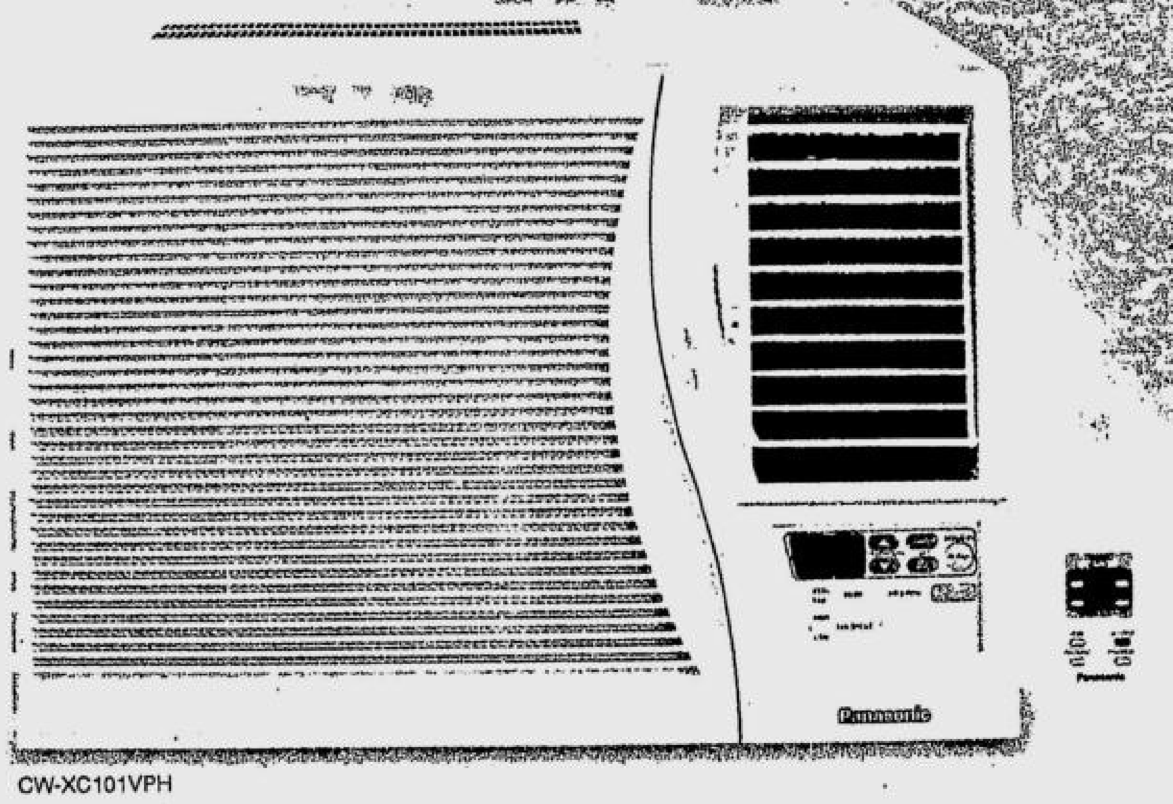

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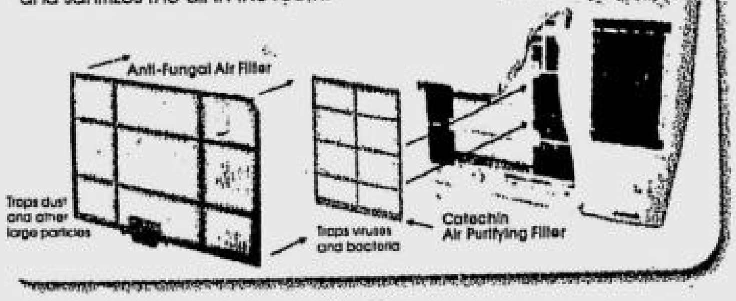
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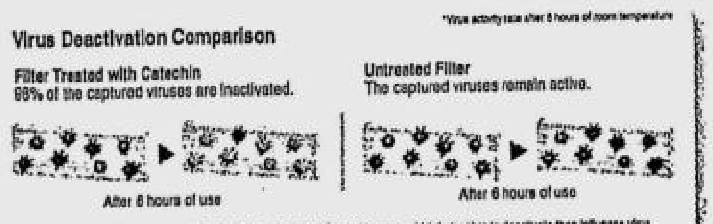
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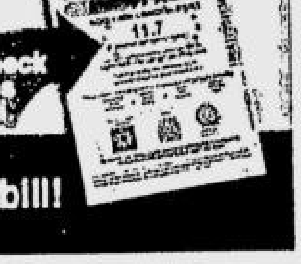

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OPINION

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No regrets

EDITORIAL

EVERY year as the nation commemorates the 1986 Edsa Revolution, Filipinos used to the Lenten feeling of remorse and regret to strike their breast, say mea culpa, and declare that everything has gone for naught. There seems to be a wide predisposition to pronounce the revolution dead, its spirit wasted away in the dispiriting times, its message lost in the welter of negative messages spawned by a people so prone to negative thoughts, like the Edsa Shrine clouded and vanished under the smog of traffic and the din of commerce.

We should be reminded what Edsa was all about, and why keeping its memory alive is important. Edsa was about the proverbial fight against tyranny, the struggle between good and evil. We may have put it too much in metaphysical terms, but all of us who lived through the terrible years of the Marcos dictatorship know that Edsa was nothing short of a holy war, a battle between light and darkness.

If Edsa is sometimes painted in terms of a miracle, it is not only because its victory was astounding. It was also a victory against all odds. It was something totally unexpected because it violated all natural laws of reason and human calculation. It was a preternatural event. If there are detractors of Edsa, it is those who protest its preternatural dimensions. The Marcos loyalists and many in the Left demean it as totally explicable, in the process blaming, for example, American interference and even CIA machination for the incident. These were the same people who had insisted that Marcos was invincible and irremovable exactly because of American sponsorship and support. When the outcome flew in their face, they had to insist that the Americans switched sides, in effect demeaning the people who went against Marcos' troops and tanks with nothing but a prayer and a hope that they would prevail with God's help.

There is, then, a dismissive attitude of democracy and the people among detractors of the Edsa Revolution. It is a dangerous attitude because it carries within it the seed of fascism; it is an orientation that has in fact spawned authoritarianism because it is contemptuous of the people's power to change things and decide for themselves. It is an anti-democratic attitude.

Edsa was a democratic revolution. It was a historic event because it reaffirmed the power and authority of the people to control and meet their destiny. If we hark back to the memory of Edsa, it is because we hark back to the singular moment of history in which we drew forth from the power of our solidarity and used that power to change things for the better.

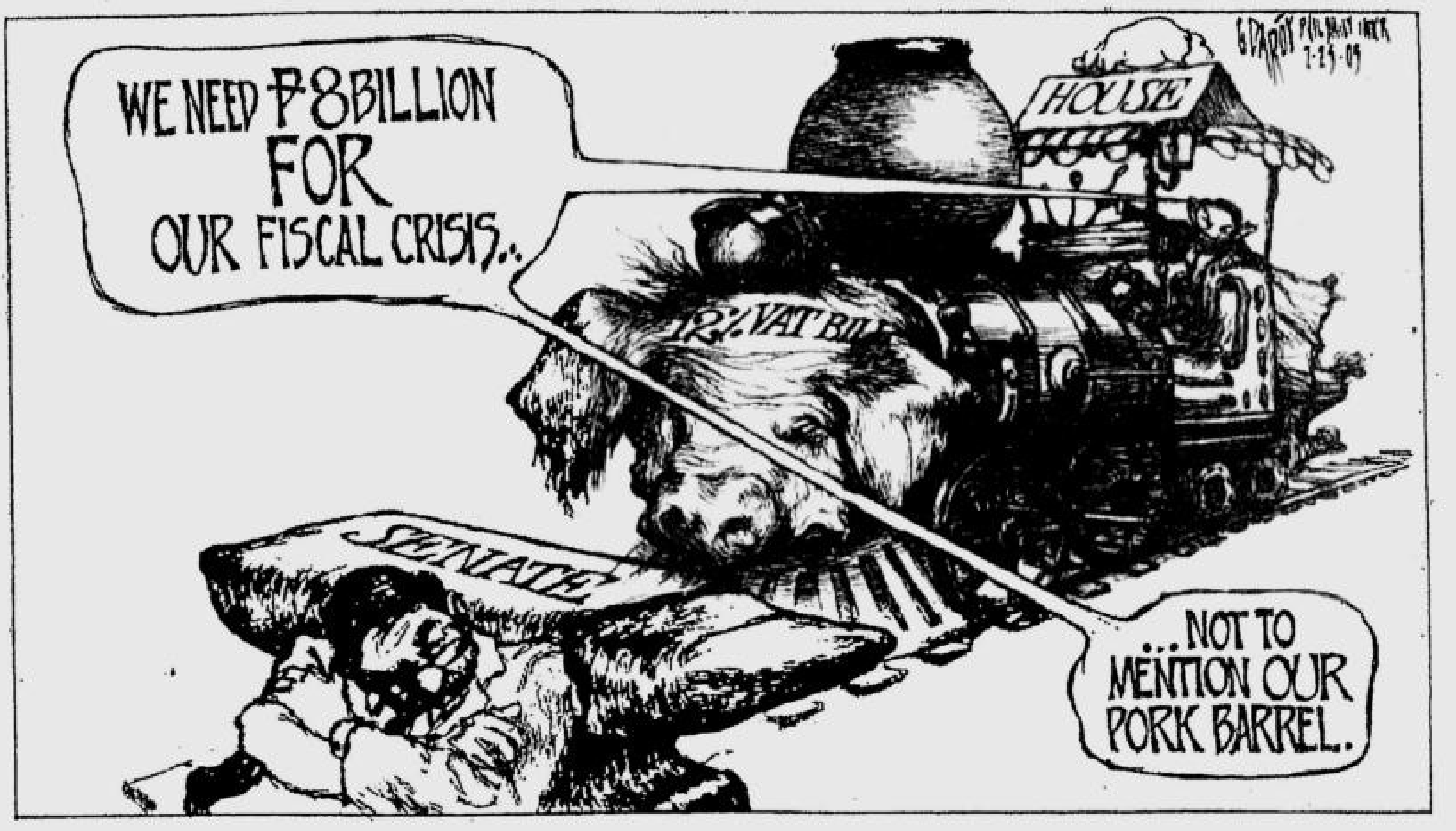
For the better? But haven't things gone worse since then? In fact, many of our reservations about Edsa are really the result of the frustrations and disappointments we have felt since then. The revolution promised a lot, and it seems the promises have not been kept. We seem to have been left holding wretched stalks of disappointment.

But Edsa's validity and power derive precisely from its memory. We hold this memory dear in the midst of so much disappointment and frustration. This memory is potent as shown by the other countries which followed its example in order to spark their own people power revolutions. Edsa signaled a democratic transition not only in the nation but also in other nations with repressive regimes. It unleashed the pro-democracy tide that swept South Korea, Poland, Pakistan and the rest of the world.

The spirit of Edsa dead? It lives on. If not for it, there would have been no Edsa 2. If not for it, we would have no vantage point from which to evaluate our democratic progress, how much we have achieved and how much we have fallen short of the ideal. In short, Edsa remains a barometer of all of our noblest aspirations as a people.

Edsa remains a valid historical event that should be appreciated on its own terms. It achieved what it set out to do: throw off the yoke of dictatorship and restore the country to the democratic grace that is its birthright. If we have fallen short of its demands. It is proof of how poor we have grown in democratic grace if we denigrate its memory and demean its legacy. Edsa may be a historical memory but it is also a historical promise—it is also eschatology. It is something to be fully born yet.

Let us embrace Edsa and forge ahead with the revolution.


WE NEED ₱8BILLION FOR OUR FISCAL CRISIS..
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G.DAROY PHIL DAILY INQR 2-25-05

Don't lift total logging ban!

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is reportedly reviewing the logging ban she had imposed immediately after floods and landslides killed hundreds of people and destroyed the homes of thousands of others in Aurora, Quezon and Nueva Ecija. The disaster was caused by rampant logging, legal and illegal, on the mountains above the towns and villages. In fact, it was the deluge of cut logs washed down the mountainsides that caused the most fatalities and damage. Now the President is reportedly thinking of lifting the ban at the insistence of loggers and wood processors, members of the Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA).

Here we go again. After the corpses have been buried and the disaster is no longer in the news, public officials change their minds about the remedial measures they have imposed to prevent a repetition of the disaster. Vested interests had time to work on the officials, especially the President, to change their minds and go back to the old ways. Anyway the tragedy has been forgotten by the people. So happy days may be here again for the loggers. And for the public officials, big and small, high and low, with whom they share their profits from the blood of the people.

It is Ormoc all over again. After floods and landslides and an avalanche of cut logs from the mountains rained down and decimated the people below, there was a lot of sorrow and wringing of hands and remedial measures and speeches from public officials. After the corpses were buried, the fatalities, the tragedy, the remedial measures, the promises were forgotten. If Ormoc had not been forgotten, what happened there would not have been repeated in Aurora and Quezon.

Even legislators have forgotten what they have said after the Aurora-Quezon tragedies when almost all of them proposed a total log ban. Now they are largely quiet, no doubt because some of them are loggers themselves. It is now the turn of the loggers to be noisy. They have had time to work on the legislators. It is only Sen. Jamby Madrigal who is steadfastly protecting the environment.

Veteran politician Nene Pimentel has been impressed by the neophyte senator. "I thought Jamby was just a rich spoiled brat," he told me last Saturday. "But it turns out she is a very intelligent person."

Pimentel narrated her performance at the Senate when she interpellated Environment Secretary Mike Defensor. She was well prepared, she knew her subject, she had studied it very well. Her questions made mincemeat of Defensor. "*Nagkalat si* Mike," he said.

Which is why I invited Madrigal to the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday. I was convinced that she knows by heart the problems of the environment. (More on this later.)

* * *

A justice of the Sandiganbayan, Raoul J. Victorino, retired the other day but his retirement was different. Justices and judges retire all the time, so what made Victorino's retirement different?

Well, most members of the bench retire with many of their cases unfinished, leaving it to their overburdened replacement the job of finishing them. I remember the case of former Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena who applied for retirement. The Supreme Court ordered him to first clear his backlog of cases, some of which had been submitted for decision for many years. Still, the justice was unable to finish all of them and left many of them behind for his replacement.

Passing cases to new judges causes difficulties and can even cause miscarriage of justice. The replacement judge has to depend entirely on the transcript and records of the case. He has not watched the demeanor of the witnesses during direct and cross examinations. It is basic that an observant judge can determine if a witness is lying or not by his demeanor in court. The new judge is deprived of that chance, and therefore the chances that he would make a wrong decision are higher. And this is one reason we have the slowest administration of justice in the world. Cases take decades to finish.

Victorino was pleasantly different. He left the court without any backlog of cases.

But that is not the only reason he is respected by his peers. He is known not only as a hard worker but also as an incorruptible jurist with integrity. Too bad he has retired. We need more jurists like him.

* * *

Speaking of miscarriage of justice, all the members of the Commission on Elections are facing graft charges before the Ombudsman for the contract to purchase counting machines intended for use in the May 10, 2004 elections. The Supreme Court declared the contract null and void. All the commissioners have been charged: Chair Benjamin Abalos, Luzviminda Tancangco, Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadiin, Resurreccion Borra, Rufino Javier and Florentino Tuazon Jr.

But in the Comelec resolution awarding the contract, which is a part of the complaint, Commissioner Javier has no signature. Instead of his signature, the initials "O.B." is written over his name and beside it the signature of Abalos. "O.B." means "Official Business." This means that Javier was out on official business at the time the resolution was discussed and passed.

Clearly Javier was not present at the meeting when the decision was made to award the contract for the supply of counting machines. He did not participate in that decision. So why is he included in the complaint?

Invisible costs of low toll rates

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE NORTH Luzon Expressway (NLEX) has been massively modernized to world-class standards of safety, speed and comfort, but alas apparently at world-class prices, too.

We used to call it the North Diversion Road. It went to seed after decades of disrepair. It simply couldn't cope with the 21st century. For most parts of the journey, highway driving was no faster than city driving because the expressway had come to serve daily commuters from bedroom communities, and served also as the main artery for farm produce bound for Manila. The annual cycle of flooding, potholes and repair had only produced a grotesque asphalt patchwork.

The pockmarked pavement did not merely slow down traffic. It excused the breakdown of discipline and imperiled road safety. I recall that until the mid-1980s, overtaking on the wrong side was not commonly done at the NLEX. As the potholes degenerated into moon craters in the well used "slow" lanes, the slow vehicles took over the "fast" lane and "overtakers" moved to the right-side lane or, worse, the road shoulders. It became impossible to enforce the most rudimentary traffic rules.

I thus welcome the spiffy new NLEX, if only because I can more easily visit my father's hometown in Agoo and my favorite spots in Sagada and, across the mountain, the mighty Chico River. For speed, they have widened the expressway and added well-placed lanes at the busy stretches, built four new interchanges, and four new toll plazas. Electronic toll collection lessens the lag time at the tollgates.

For safety and comfort, the toll managers monitor traffic through surveillance cameras and guide motorists with electronic message panels. Motorists can phone for emergency help in case of breakdowns and accidents. A 24-hour NLE radio station will give travelers traffic flow information, weather updates and emergency reports.

All these come at a stiff price, now being opposed by some local governments and transport groups. So you think we save money with low toll rates? Low toll fees can be falsely cheap. Sure we pay a niggardly fee at the toll booths, but we pay the true costs when we start driving: we easily wear out the suspension, change oil more frequently due to excessive idling, wear out our engine by constantly running at low-gear, and lose the most important commodity of all, time—time better spent earning money, relaxing with the family, or simply stopping to smell the flowers.

Why then the persistent illusion? The answer is simple: We prefer the comfort of low rates that we can count and ignore the real costs that are invisible. Worse, factor in the amorphous costs to the public: increased policing and judicial costs from traffic mishaps, increased insurance charges, and excess exhaust emissions spewing out of diesel engines stuck in traffic.

Sustaining the new NLEX entails a realistic fare hike—and the Manila North managers have ably made their case. Their studies show that consumers save more on vehicle maintenance than they pay in toll fees. Indeed per kilometer, it is even cheaper to go through the NLEX (only P2.91/km for cars) than the SLEX (P4.17/km). Discounts are available to jeepneys, FXs, public utility buses and delivery trucks.

Transport companies have now asked for fare hikes. Beware lest they shift to the consumer the entire toll rate increase (that the passengers see) but keep for themselves the savings in fuel and maintenance (that the passengers cannot see). Add to that their enhanced profits now that they can manage more trips beyond the usual, and the transport companies can cry their way to the bank.

The best way to "surface" the invisible costs of low toll rates is to give the traveling public a genuine choice. Government must improve the service roads and the MacArthur Highway and make them real options. After all, that is what democracy means. On political questions, we vote with our ballots. On economic questions, we vote with our pocketbooks (and, on the road, with our wheels). Choosing compels us to confront what we truly value: fast but costly driving versus snail-paced driving on the cheap.

Another contested feature is the so-called Open System: they did away with the first six toll gates; users pay a flat rate of P42 up front and just drive straight through their exits. But those who go out at, say, Valenzuela (the second exit) ask: Why should we pay as much as those who travel farther along?

Manila North has likened this to the "flagdown" of taxicabs, an apt and popular analogy except that it makes sense mainly to the tollway managers. For them, the flat rate shows the minimum charge below which collecting the fees is more expensive than the fee itself. However, we need to explain what's in it for the traveling public, namely, that this will ease traffic congestion at the early choke points, and whatever nickels-and-dimes they save by pro-rating the P42 along the six exits are easily lost by slow traffic and delay.

For me the most invisible yet most grating price exacted by the old dilapidated highway was the eternal guesswork entailed in planning a trip. Life is "iffy" enough without having to play prophet while driving, especially when my kids were small and would every so often ask oh so gently, "Dad, are we there yet?" For the rate-fixers, this is the philosopher's dilemma of "incommensurability," or what the ads more popularly call the Mastercard moments Toll fee—P203; Predictable travel times and being able to promise the kids we'll be in Mac Donald's in 15 minutes—priceless. Whoever thought the rehabilitated North Expressway may yet lead us to "the road less traveled"?

* * *

Comments to raul.pangalangan@up.edu.ph

The view from the ground

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE FIRST People Power Revolution, which reached its climax 19 years ago today with the toppling of the Marcos dictatorship, is being celebrated with waning public enthusiasm. Official attempts to mobilize at least 30,000 people to attend a commemorative rally at Edsa, where it all started on Feb. 25, 1986, failed to produce even a ghost of the millions that flooded the highway at its peak, despite efforts to truck crowds from the provinces.

Trucking crowds to fill empty spaces at Edsa debased the Edsa spirit. The effort tried to reproduce the original Edsa scenario without the circumstances that made Edsa happen. As a result, this shabby attempt to reconstruct a once-in-a - lifetime historic event, with a counterfeit reproduction, was a flop.

No one, absolutely no one, was trucked to Edsa 1 to express the overwhelming and no longer repressible outrage of the Filipino people clamoring for change. Trucking people to rallies demeans Edsa because it falls back on the conventional approach used in election campaigning and organizing political protests by recruiting hoodlums among the urban poor.

If anyone tried to truck people to join the mass movement flowing to Edsa, he would have been laughed at, or worse, lynched to death. In my recollection of political mass movements in the country, Edsa was a landmark, without precedent. It was the first time, without exception, that Filipinos joined en masse a public demonstration without a personal agenda, without being paid, without expecting private gain—except primarily to regain their liberty. It was the first spontaneous combustion of public anger expressed in such mammoth scale, in which the people risked their lives by forming barricades against military armor, to deliver their message that they had had enough of more than 14 years of abuse of power. It is this element of taking risks, without thought of the consequences to life and limb and rewards, that defines Edsa 1 and that is easily forgotten.

It can't be contradicted that no one who joined the furious river of the multitudes who braved the tanks ever thought of political rewards, Cabinet portfolios, jobs for the boys, representation of seats in parliaments, or business contracts in a new dispensation that might replace the regime. This was clearly the dynamic that engulfed the Edsa movement. It was a dynamic that those who were swept into the movement could not and did not fail to recognize and to feel.

Whether or not the events after Edsa did not live up to public expectations—whatever these are—the fact remains that it was a rare event in which, it is safe to say, the Filipino people were unified by a compelling idea or a cause—bringing a change of political leadership—without having a concrete idea of programs and policies that would follow or of what was in store for them, as individuals or for their families. As such, Edsa 1 was a bold leap into the unknown, an act of faith.

Many Filipinos would like to remember Edsa as an electrifying example of a peaceful strike for liberty that inspired similar upheavals in the Soviet-bloc Eastern Europe (East Germany and Czechoslovakia and even Ceausescu's Romania). But this essay would like to remember Edsa not from that global scope, but from the level of people in the streets—the common people—who participated in that movement, without thought of personal gain, and who made Edsa possible. To me, the common people were the real heroes of Edsa.

It is therefore reassuring, despite the scanty crowds at the Edsa celebration, that the best form of commemoration comes not from the official rituals but from the recollections that are now coming to light and published in the press from small people who were part of that unforgettable movement. Let people talk about their experiences (and they include the RAM coup plotters, who now feel their role in sparking the Edsa Revolt has been marginalized by the flurry of credit-taking after the triumph at Edsa). Let their story be told, as well as that of other unrecognized actors. Their stories will surely fill the gaps, for the whole story of Edsa remains untold.

So far, for the past 19 years, we have heard and read only the stories of some of the key players at Edsa, among them, opposition leader Corazon Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Juan Ponce Enrile, Gen. Fidel Ramos, Col. Gregorio Honasan and his cabal in the RAM, the Marcos cabal, and figures of the Left and the opposition. Their stories present the points of view of the central players who belong to the political elite, the political class, who have dominated Filipino politics for a century. Their stories dwell on the theme of struggle for power.

The view from the level of the elites serves their political and social interests. Their views tend to paint them in a good light and to be self-justifying. So, the history of Edsa during the past 19 years has been colored and dominated by the perspectives of the elites and has been debated on the narrow margins of these perspectives with which the Filipino masses cannot identify.

The history of Edsa viewed from the ground offers a different perspective and interpretation from that presented by the elites as they saw the event and how it affected them personally and their political and social interests. The view from the ground comes from the countless masses who were swept into that powerful tide of that great mass movement. Their story has not been told. Their story is the key and missing element in the rewriting of Edsa's history, which is only starting. For it was the people in the streets who made Edsa.

No forgetting

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MANY Filipinos, I bet, will celebrate this day as just the start of a three-day weekend. Indeed, as Bill Luz, who sits with me on the Edsa People Power Commission, pointed out in a recent meeting, more than half of the present Philippine population has no memories at all of the event we're celebrating today.

Born 19 years ago or thereabouts, these young Filipinos would have heard of Edsa only from their parents and older friends and relatives, or from their teachers and the media. And whatever impressions they would have gathered—positive or negative—about the first People Power Revolt would have been filtered through other people's memories, perceptions and biases. And even then the event would be for them simply something that took place a long time ago.

Take my own children. My son, who was 6 at the time, remembers those days as mainly a period of his life when he was home alone most of the time "with no one but the *yayas* for company." His father was not just keeping vigil on Edsa then but also in the hospital, since I gave birth to our daughter on Feb. 26.

My daughter, my Edsa baby, likes listening to stories about the events surrounding her birth. But were it not for Edsa Dos and the chance it gave her and her brother to experience people power first-hand, the story of those three days would have remained charming fairy-tales to her.

* * *

AS it is, I'm hard put dredging memories, not to mention passion and fervor, from the first Edsa uprising. While the event holds a lot of personal meaning, it's also difficult not to feel a twinge of disappointment and betrayal. I'm almost embarrassed when my children ask me to recall yet one more time the story of Edsa. From this remove, our collective hopes and dreams, the elaborate visions of a new Philippines we had woven from our years of street protests and earnest campaigning for Cory seem the height of naiveté.

So can we blame students, young professionals, young workers and *jologs* for turning away today, indifferent to the spirit of celebration we are still trying to wring from the Edsa commemoration? Despite all I've said previously, my answer still is: We can't blame them, but we can and should try to draw them still into celebrating Edsa.

Though subsequent developments failed to measure up to the elaborate myths we had concocted from our fading hopes, those three days on Edsa (and everywhere else Filipinos poured out into the streets in outrage at the stolen elections) were and are a proud moment for Filipinos. We shortchange the next generation when we denigrate and belittle our achievement, for it is their achievement, too. It was they, after all, who inspired our reckless courage on the highway. And it is they who will carry forward whatever little remains of the "promise" of Edsa.

* * *

EVEN today, there are people who seek to rewrite the story of what took place 19 years ago. Imelda Marcos, exulting in the ruling of a US superior court overruling a Hawaii judge's award of damages to Filipino human rights victims, misinterprets the ruling and takes it as a "vindication" of her and her late husband's conjugal dictatorship.

All that the US court said is that the Philippine justice system, and not any foreign judge, should be the one to decide whether victims of human rights violations during the dictatorship should receive compensation from the government. It said nothing that could even be remotely construed as absolution of the Marcoses' many sins. The claimants have offered proof of the torture they personally suffered, or of the killings and disappearances of their loved ones perpetrated by the Marcos military. And nothing in the ruling prevents the Arroyo government (or whoever will be president in the future) from going after the Marcos assets to fund the compensation the victims seek.

The "RAM Boys" are reported to be preparing their own book about their failed coup attempt, doubtless carrying their own version of the events. I have yet to read the book, but I can guess at its contents, as it will undoubtedly echo many of the statements that their patron, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, and their putative leader, Sen. Gringo Honasan, have already uttered in previous Edsa commemorations.

From their point of view, it was only they who staked their lives when they holed up in Camp Aguinaldo. It was only they who defied the dictator, even if, up until a few days before, they were basking in the power and privileges that proximity to the dictator allowed them. And let's not forget that Enrile himself admitted that he helped cheat Cory in Cagayan.

* * *

BUT if Imelda and the RAM Boys and their sponsors have developed amnesia and denial about the "real" story of Edsa, there are still many of us who haven't. And it is up to us, who still remember, to ensure that the truth of those events is told to the Filipinos who have no memories of Edsa. Even if, painful as it may be, we may end up conceding that the future could not but collapse from the weight of our grandiose dreams.

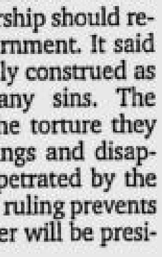
Next year, we mark the 20th anniversary of Edsa. While we seek ways to bring the commemoration forward and make the rituals more relevant to the problems we face today, we also need to protect and preserve the memories of the past. Even now, the Edsa People Power Commission is calling on everyone who has memorabilia dating back not just to Edsa but also to the post-Ninoy assassination protests and the snap elections, to turn over these items for archiving and possible display in a mobile exhibit planned for next year's commemoration.

If half of the population has no memories at all of Edsa, then it's up to the other half to make sure that the true story of our proudest moment is preserved and not forgotten.

Rizal's two unfinished novels

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



EACH year on Feb. 25, people are busy with a commemoration of the 1986 People Power Revolt that drove Ferdinand Marcos from power and installed Corazon Aquino as president of the Philippines. Since the INQUIRER is also one of the main products of those troubled times, it tries valiantly to keep the flame of Edsa alive, by publishing first-hand accounts on the front page.

But all this now seems like a dimly lit part of the Philippine past, especially to many of my students who were toddlers when all this was going on, changing the lives of their parents and all those who were adults at the time. Feb. 25 should be a time to remember the events of Edsa 1986 and today's column should focus on people power, but I go back to the late 19th century.

What better proof could there be that I am a walking anachronism than that I associate Feb. 25 not with Edsa 1986 but with Berlin 1887? Very few people know and remember that at 11:30 p.m. on Feb. 25, 1887 in Berlin, Jose Rizal placed the last period on the manuscript of "Noli Me Tangere."

I remember February 1986 well because that was supposed to be the centennial of the "Noli" but then things were overshadowed by the events of Edsa. At that time, I had embarked on the project that would study the novel as it progressed from its rough drafts to the final clean manuscript copy to the first printed edition of the novel. How did the novel develop? Even this study was overtaken by Edsa.

Working on this led to other unfinished manuscripts by Rizal in the vault of the National Library, and two of my favorites are worth remembering today because they should have been completed like the "Noli" and "Fili." The first is labelled "Principios de una novela satirica" by the National Library but it is better known under the title "Una visita del Señor a Filipinas" or in its English translation, "The Lord Gazes at the Philippine Islands." As an untitled work, it goes under a variety of names depending on which text or translation you are reading, thus it is also known as "Friars and Filipinos" or "The Divine Wrath."

The story opens with God the Father pacing around in heaven. He hears a stream of complaints from the earth and turns his attention to the Philippines where the complaints are coming from. He walks around, consulting a number of people, including Confucius and Buddha, asking about certain beings called friars and a pope who claims to speak in His name on earth. God traces all this to the Christian Church, so he summons both Jesus Christ and St. Peter to explain how and why this state of affairs has come about. Not satisfied with their answers, God then commands Jesus and Peter to return to earth, investigate in the Philippines and report back to him. Jesus, naturally, refuses to go but is assured that on this trip he will not have to undergo another round of suffering and death on a cross.

Jesus and Peter are transported back to earth, but God, it seems, has a bad pitching arm or an equally bad sense of direction because the pair appear, not in the Philippines, but in Hong Kong. They first visit a tailor because they are wearing New Testament attire instead of the clothing in vogue in the late 19th century. They learn about passports, visas and all the necessities for travel on board a regular steamer service from Hong Kong to Manila. All should have gone well, but upon arrival in Manila, the boat is placed under quarantine, adding to the impatience of the duo who wanted to return to heaven as soon as possible. Jesus notes down all his observations (actually, more complaints) in a pocket notebook, which is later opened by Spanish customs and immigration officials in Manila, leading to yet another round of detention. When Jesus and Peter complain about the shabby treatment they receive in the hands of the Spaniards who do not know who they really are, both are branded as subversives by the authorities.

Somehow Peter manages to escape and searches for the Manila Cathedral, which he has heard in heaven is the seat of the archbishop whose authority emanated from Peter himself. As a matter of fact, a statue of Peter is to be found in the Cathedral. This is the place to go for help.

While leaving the Customs house, Peter overhears Jesus being interrogated, and at this point he feels so relieved that it is daytime because then he doesn't have to hear the cock crow thrice again.

Unfortunately, the unfinished novel ends abruptly on this note, leaving us wishing this classic of Philippine comic or satirical literature was completed. But then, that is Rizal for you: truly a man with so many talents, he tried out so many things but left many things half finished. What better word to describe this but *sayang*!

Then there is the other unfinished work of Rizal, also untitled, but known as "Memorias de un gallo." Written in the first person, it is a fictional autobiography of a newly hatched chick trying to fathom the mysteries of the world outside the secure confines of the eggshell.

The chick asks the mother hen the great existential question, "What is a man?"

A man, replies the mother, is "a chicken bigger than all of you, very powerful, very strong."

On this enlightening sentence, Rizal abruptly ends the manuscript to keep us guessing what he really meant well on to the next century.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Math, physics and HIV/AIDS

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I WAS recently interviewing a 22-year-old male in an urban poor community for a sexuality research project, when he got around to boasting that he'd never had to pay for sex. There were many girls in their community who were readily available. When I asked if he used condoms, he scoffed, "*Malinis naman sila. Mga pok pok lang kasi* (They're clean. They're just *pok pok.*)."

I was flabbergasted. In my time, "*pok pok*" meant a sex worker, but apparently there's been a semantic shift so it now means females who don't necessarily charge for sex but who are available in exchange for a night out drinking. Because they're sort of free, they're seen as "clean."

Last Wednesday, I wrote that the AIDS epidemic in the Philippines, often described as "low and slow," may have shifted gears away from a low simmer to a slow boil. The concerns have been serious enough to spur UNAIDS, the Swedish Embassy and the Asian Development Bank to sponsor an AIDS summit in Manila earlier this week.

At that AIDS summit, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit named the groups most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS: 500,000 to one million sex workers and their clients; 15.7 million young people aged between 15 and 24; 7.6 million overseas Filipino workers.

The figures, and the story of the "*pok pok*," got me thinking about how we urgently need more research on Filipino sexuality so we can project how HIV/AIDS might spread, and what we can do in terms of prevention programs.

Critical mass and velocity

Epidemiologists (scientists who study how diseases spread) often use terms from math and physics. Thus, you will find references to "critical mass," which in the case of an HIV/AIDS epidemic, would be the pool of infected people who engage in risky sex, which means frequent unprotected sex with a constant change of partners. Once a critical mass is reached, the "velocity" of HIV spread could increase very quickly.

How might young adults contribute to the critical mass? In terms of numbers, their sheer size could mean serious problems. Unfortunately, our anxieties with young people focus mainly on premarital sex, to the point where we may have become blinded to the broader issue of irresponsible sex, whether in or out of marriage.

The 2003 National Demographic and Health Survey found that by the age of 19, one out of every five Filipinas has began child-bearing. I feel this is an even more important indicator of risk than premarital sex. Young people who have had their "coital debut" (first intercourse) may not necessarily be having regular sex, especially if they remain unmarried. I'm more worried about the young Filipinas who get pregnant early and are then marched off to get married.

These young couples could actually contribute to the critical mass for HIV/AIDS. Young husbands, especially if forced into an early marriage, are more likely to be having extramarital flings, exposing themselves and their young wives to sexually transmitted diseases. Yet, little is being done to educate these young couples about their risks.

Transactional sex

What about the sex workers? When "prostitution" is mentioned, we imagine the HIV/AIDS epidemic moving at a high velocity, in terms of frenzied activities in brothels, bars and massage parlors, each sex worker servicing dozens of partners each week.

I'd challenge those perceptions. An ongoing research project of Health Action Information Network (HAIN) found GROs ("guest relations officers") complaining about being suspended for not being able to reach a quota of three customers a week ... for "tabling," meaning customers who will just sit and drink with them. Similarly, massage parlor attendants complain that there are times when they may have no customers at all for a week or so. The brutal fact is that in the Philippines, the supply of sex workers outstrips the demand.

While government and NGOs concentrate on monitoring establishment-based workers through testing and campaigns to use condoms, we may be missing out on an even more vulnerable segment of the population: those engaged in transactional sex.

Many Filipino men may actually avoid the entertainment establishments because they're expensive. A cheaper alternative is transactional sex, involving freelance, part-time sex workers. These include students who may solicit clients in malls or out in the streets to supplement their allowances or to rush a tuition fee installment (thus the term "prosti-tuition"). In transactional sex, the financial remuneration may be quite low; in fact, sometimes the transactions will involve material benefits—anything from a few bottles of beer, to clothes, to watches and cell phones—rather than actual cash.

Those who engage in transactional sex (and these can include the *pok pok*) do not usually think of themselves as sex workers, and will rarely think of using condoms. We therefore have a potential here for rapid HIV transmission.

'Suki' and FB

Ironically, it may be our Catholic culture that creates this demand for transactional sex, as well as other varieties of risky sex. Because outright prostitution is seen as "sinful," our men create alternative arrangements to downplay the commercial angle. Thus, when they do go to entertainment establishments or pick up a freelance sex worker, they will go into "dating" mode, complete with courtship.

I call these "*suki*" relationships, where a customer returns to the same sex worker over several weeks or months, slowly transformed from a "guest" to a "boyfriend," or even a temporary "*asawa*" (spouse). What does this mean in terms of HIV transmission? On one hand, it does mean a reduced rate of partner change, which could slow down HIV spread. On the other hand, because the relationship has some semblance of a "boyfriend/girlfriend" arrangement, with illusions of fidelity, condoms could disappear from the equation, which means greater risks for HIV.

Confused? I haven't even started talking about FBs or f—king buddies. Like the *suki* relationship between a sex worker and a frequent-flier customer, FBs create some semblance of a monogamous relationship, without imposing any claims of commitment to each other. The risks for HIV exist because there will be change of partners, and condoms are again not used because the partners don't think of each other as sex workers.

There will be overlaps across FB, transactional and commercial sex, i.e., you can have someone working as a GRO at night, while supplementing her income with an occasional fling on the side as a *pok pok* and maintaining a special FB live-in relationship with a boyfriend from high school. What we see in these overlaps are dangerous "bridges" for HIV infections crossing over from one group to another.

Sex and the risks for HIV/AIDS involve more than acts. They involve a mazeway of perceptions, meanings, scripts, feelings about different partners, in different settings. The sooner we understand these mazeways, the better equipped we will be to handle the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

LETTERS

No reason for the Osama bin Laden tag

I WRITE in reaction to Recah Trinidad's column, which chose not to directly identify me as one of the self-styled saviors of sports acting like a terrorist and a troublemaker. (PDI, 2/16/05)

For the record, I am stating that I do not feel alluded to by Trinidad; I am certain that Trinidad was referring to me. This I can prove beyond a shadow of doubt. All I have to do is submit a compilation of his previous columns in which he established his disdain for my "style." He has called me names before, criticized my preference for white pants and "shady" past.

He added a new dimension by referring to me as a former gangster behind the bid of some individuals seeking to oust the president of the Billiards Association, Ernie Fajardo.

The information contained in his column are tainted with malice and, at the very least, half-baked.

True, I arranged a meeting between Fajardo and his secretary general, Joaquin Perez de Tagle, several weeks ago at the behest of the association president. The two were not one on the issue of holding an election for a new set of officers. They had a heated exchange of ideas. De Tagle was insisting on an election and Fajardo rejected it. Under the constitution and by-laws of the Billiards Association, the term of office of the president and other board members is four years. The last election of the Billiard and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP) was in 1992.

When both parties sought my opinion, I simply said I am inclined to agree that an election is necessary. That was the extent of my so-called involvement and, to date, I see no reason why I should be tagged as the Osama bin Laden of sports.

Now, on the threat of Efren Reyes and Django Bustamante not to play for the country if Fajardo is replaced, I say: based on my recollection, Fajardo was absent when our team made its appearance in the maiden staging of billiards in the 1998 Asian Games in Bangkok. Fajardo's presidency began in 1992.

I also would like to remind Reyes and Bustamante, who did not win gold medals despite their lofty billings in the 2003 SEA Games in Vietnam, that the man to whom they are pledging their unqualified support, was also absent in that event. Prior to this, in 2002, Fajardo also left the Asian Games in Busan, hours before the country was to play for the 9-ball doubles.

Add to this the fact that Fajardo does not attend BSCP-sanctioned tournaments and observe national tryouts or attend international conferences.

—GO TENG KOK,
president,
Philippine Amateur
Track and Field Association,
South Wing, Rizal Memorial Track-
Football Stadium,
RMSC, M. Adriatico St.,
Malate, Manila

On reviving mining industry

(INQ7.net editor's note: Below are selected, condensed postings of INQ7.net readers on the site's Talking Points section. For the postings' full text and to participate in the discussion, go to news.inq7.net/talkingpoints/)

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

I THINK the government should instead give more attention to sustainable development, push through with it and fund more environmental projects.—**Lorenzo Jr. Cordova**

* * *

Three things will materialize if mining is successful in the Philippines:

First is the revenue we will get directly from the revival of this vital resource. Second, our credit rating will go up. If this happens, the interest rate we pay to service the debt will be much less.

Those dollars are enough to spend on infrastructure like schools, bridges, [and on] increased salaries [for] our teachers and public employees.

Third, there will be jobs for our skilled workers and for people who can handle a shovel. The country wins three-fold...—**Mang Isko**

* * *

I'm not for mining! The only one who will benefit form it will be Jose Pidal, not Juan de la Cruz.—**Arnaldo Batoon**

* * *

Many countries prospered through their mining industry.

The mining industry, properly managed and regulated, will bring economic benefits to the Filipino people and to our country.

However, the culture of corruption in our country has put in danger not only the environment but [also] our culture and mind-set.

Corruption will make the mining industry a danger to the environment and the Filipino people.—**Benny C. Cenzon**

* * *

It is not fair to allow other countries to take the lion's share of our country's wealth. It is better if the government promotes and subsidizes the operations of local mining firms. Then, we can be sure to head [down] the road to national industrialization and genuine economic recovery.—**Nikki Rose Pili**

* * *

There are two countries in the world the Filipinos can look to and learn from their mining experience. These are the tiny Pacific island nation of Nauru and Australia.

Nauru exploited its land and benefited immensely from the mining boom there for a short time. It became the richest country in the Pacific until its mineral deposits ran out; now it is almost bankrupt, with almost nothing to show for it. Its land has become one of the world's worst environmental disaster areas. No amount of money can give the country back its land.

The only people who benefited were the corrupt politicians and foreign mining companies which are now looking for their next mining victims. No doubt, they will promise a lot but once the poor country's resources are gone, so will they.

Australia is another story. This is one of the few countries in the world that continually benefits from large-scale mining. Taxes from mining companies go to build and maintain first-class roads, hospitals, world-class universities, etc.

Lands there are also being stripped bare, but this is a really big country with a vast desert which, though almost useless, is good for mining. One thing missing here is a corrupt system. This country is rich because of mining.—**Archie Serafica**

* * *

The real treasure of the Philippines—the richness of our culture, biodiversity, and the beauty of our indigenous people—has rarely been mentioned in the debates on mining. If we put an economic value to what we already have, do you think it will not surpass the "possibilities" of mining?

The real problem lies in the fact that people in this country, whether indigenous or not, are not really valued. This is why we see this government encouraging modern-day slavery, the enslavement of our Filipino entertainers, nurses and teachers.—**Cornel Bongco**

* * *

In my honest opinion, mining is OK in the Philippines as long as politics will not or never come in! One of the many reasons why investors are avoiding the Philippines is due to red tape and "dirty politics"!—**Jun Arevalo**

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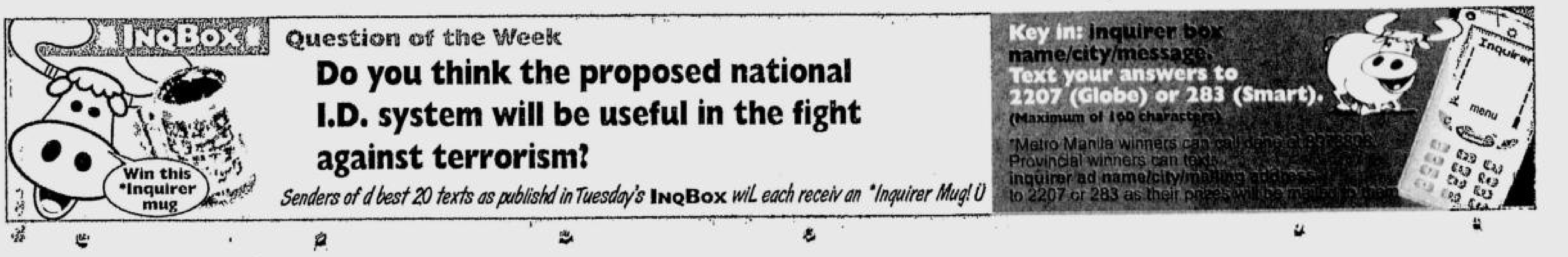
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Question of the Week
Do you think the proposed national I.D. system will be useful in the fight against terrorism?
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US execs tagged 'undesirable aliens'

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—For not paying their taxes, the provincial board here on Wednesday declared American executives of a contracting firm of the Casecnan Multi-Purpose Irrigation and Power Project (CMIPP) "undesirable aliens."

Board Member Edgardo Balgos, the resolution's sponsor, also asked the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration to immediately deport Raymond Cunningham, project manager, and other top executives of CE Casecnan Water and Energy Co. (Cecwec) for not heeding their demand for the payment of real property taxes amounting to more than P250 million.

"With all these benefits the contractor and its foreign executives get and enjoy from the natural resources of the province, they have refused to pay their financial obligation which is more than enough to supplement the budget of the province," Balgos said.

He also said the contractor's refusal to pay and honor their tax obligation is "tantamount to gross disrespect to duly constituted authority, including existing laws and regulations of the province."

Gov. Luisa Cuaresma also said the financial obligation of Cecwec can be used to help the plight of Bugkalots in the Casecnan area.

Started in 1995 under the build-operate-transfer scheme, the CMIPP seeks to divert 800 million cubic meters of water from the rivers of Alfonso Castañeda town to the Pantabangan Dam in Nueva Ecija to irrigate 139,200 hectares of farms in Central Luzon. The plant also helps generate 140 to 150 megawatts of power in the Luzon grid.

But lawyer Linda Castillo, CalEnergy vice president for legal and corporate affairs, said the provision of the BOT scheme with the National Irrigation Administration limits the circumstances in which CE Casecnan is permitted to pay real property taxes.

Castillo said NIA had protested the real property tax assessment of the provincial government, raising legal issues on the appropriate assessment levels applied by the province on the various types of real property covered in the assessment.

"The case filed by NIA is now pending with the central board of assessment appeals. CE Casecnan will pay the tax as soon as NIA and the Department of Finance give it the instruction to do so," she said.

Castillo said CE Casecnan has paid all taxes that were not subject of any litigation by NIA. She said CE Casecnan also continues to implement corporate social responsibility programs designed to uplift the status and living conditions of its constituent communities. *Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cordillera found with no agenda for new mining

BAGUIO CITY—The Regional Development Council (RDC) in the Cordillera has endorsed the tax reform measures filed by several Cordillera congressmen that will benefit communities where top industries like mining operate.

But the region, which hosted the first Philippine mines, also resolved to first consult its constituents to determine how communities will receive a revived mining industry that is being supported by the government.

Some of the oldest mine firms in the country started in the region but mining is not a major economic driving force in the 2005-2010 medium term development plan of the Cordillera, according to documents obtained by the INQUIRER.

Thomas Killip, presidential assistant for the Cordillera, voiced out this reluctance during the RDC's first assembly for 2005 on Thursday. He said the RDC's chief concern must be the 13 major watersheds in the Cordillera.

Killip, a former mayor of Sagada, Mt. Province, said the Cordillera's role as watershed cradle is more critical to stabilizing the country's economy.

RDC Resolution 9 supports House Bill 1145, sponsored by Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan, which directs firms to pay the 40 percent mandatory share of local governments from their taxes directly to the local treasuries.

Domogan said HB 1145 complements other measures that will make mining acceptable again to the provinces. He said another measure separates the Mines and Geosciences Bureau from the environmental protection agencies of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to allow it a free hand in promoting mining.

These bills have passed the House committees that studied them and are ready for debate on the floor, Domogan said.

The measures will assure local governments that the communities will get direct benefits from the industry, he said.

The RDC "recognizes the Supreme Court's favorable decision on the constitutionality of the Philippine Mining Act."

But the RDC "also noted the prevailing negative public perception on the impact of mining to the environment," RDC documents said.

RDC Resolution 10 directs government agencies to proceed with "constructive consultations on responsible mining." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

'Acetylene gang' head arrested

BACOLOD CITY—Police have finally captured the leader of the acetylene gang that has been tagged in the recent series of bank and pawnshop robberies on Negros Island and in Iloilo.

Peter Camed, alias "Peter Sumatka," was arrested on Wednesday in a police raid on the house of his common-law wife, Flordeliz Jaculbe, in Barangay Mabigo, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental.

A police team from San Carlos City in Negros Occidental and Canlaon served the arrest warrant for the case of robbery issued by Judge Rolindo Beldia of the regional trial court in San Carlos.

Supt. Ricardo de la Paz, police chief of San Carlos City, said Camed, a native of La Trinidad in Benguet, has several pending arrest warrants for robbery in San Carlos and Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental.

Senior Insp. Clarence Donga-il, Police Regional Office in Western Visayas (PRO-6) deputy operations chief, informed De la Paz on Wednesday night that Camed and his group also have several pending arrest warrants in Iloilo City.

De la Paz said several maps of various provinces in the country were recovered from Camed who was detained in the San Carlos police station.

The capture of Camed came almost after two years of manhunt operations initiated by the San Carlos City police in coordination with the Canlaon and Bacolod police.

De la Paz said Camed admitted participation in the robbery of the Lhuiller pawnshop in San Carlos City in August 2003 where P1.9 million in cash and jewelry were stolen.

His group was also tagged by the police for at least five pawnshop and bank robberies in Iloilo and Dumaguete. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Mati teachers protest 'love bonus' deduction

MATI, Davao Oriental—Teachers at the Mati National Comprehensive High School (MNCHS) here are mad because they only got P500 out of the P3,000 "love bonus" each of them were supposed to received.

"The amount deducted from us was very huge. Maybe we call that hate bonus already," a complaining teacher said in jest.

Other complaining teachers said they could not understand why they only received P500 when the bonus was supposed to be deduction-free.

Ceferino Toloy, MNCHS officer in charge, quoted school principal Sinfrosa Resabal as saying that the teachers have earlier agreed to donate P2,500 of their bonus to the school's fencing project.

"She (Resabal) was shocked by the teachers' protests because all of them agreed during a meeting to donate P2,500 of the P3,000 Valentine's Day bonus. During our meeting, not one of them opposed the idea," Toloy said.

But Toloy himself admitted that the teachers were "not compelled to give their love bonus to the fencing project."

"They can get their money back," he said, speaking on behalf of Resabal.

The complaining teachers said they were not questioning the fencing project and that they were willing to donate a portion of their bonus.

"Let the teachers decide on the amount he or she wanted to donate to the school fencing project. If the amount is fixed by a single person, then it could no longer be called donation but a compulsory contribution," another complainant said.

Lillian Calicdan, Davao Oriental assistant schools division superintendent, said she would look into the complaints of the teachers. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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FAMILY PORTRAIT
Philippine Army Maj. Gen. Romeo Alamillo (left), the Philippine director for Balikatan '05, shakes hands with his American counterpart, Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom at a site where soldiers from the two armed forces are building schools.

COA says funds for press club building missing

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Commission on Audit (COA) has found irregularities in the construction of the Iloilo Press Club (IPC) building funded from the pork barrel of former Sen. Loren Legarda.

In a three-page audit observation report, the COA said the P500,000 intended for the project "could not be accounted for due to improper implementation of the project" and may result in loss of government funds.

The report, dated Feb. 3, 2005, was prepared by State Auditor IV Marietta Sofia, City Accounts team leader, and reviewed by Arlene Togonon, COA regional cluster director.

But former IPC president Lemuel Fernandez said he has not received a copy of the COA report. He, however, maintained there was nothing irregular in the implementation of the project.

"We have the documents and records to prove that the fund was disbursed properly and that the project was implemented," he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The fund was released on Jan. 8, 2004 under Fernandez's term, which ended in July last year. He was succeeded by German Gonzales.

There are two factions claiming to be the Iloilo Press Club in this city.

Lawyer Eduardo Jalbuna, who heads the other faction, said they have no knowledge of the funds and how they were spent.

The Iloilo Regional Trial Court ruled in June 2003 that there are two existing Iloilo Press Clubs—one founded in 1937 and the other organized in 2003.

The court said Jalbuna's group was the one founded in 1937 while the other was the one formerly headed by Fernandez.

Jalbuna said an investigation should be conducted based on the audit report to ensure the transparency of the disbursement of public funds.

"It is unfortunate that the media, supposedly the watchdog of government, is now under scrutiny for alleged irregularities," he said.

In its report, the COA said the release of the funds to the IPC was contrary to guidelines on the release of PDAF funds under the National Budget Circular No. 476.

₱1.7M in used clothes seized

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The antismuggling team here on Thursday seized 17 tons of used clothing worth P1.7 million that were illegally imported from Taiwan.

Retired Maj. Gen. Jose Calimlim, head of the Task Force Subic, said the shipment was consigned to Batusai Trading in Parañaque City and was transported here on Feb. 12 by Riverstar Inc. aboard the vessel MOL Endurance.

Calimlim said the items, which were loaded in a 40-foot container van, were declared as 38 bales of garment with a total weight of more than 17,000 kilograms and worth $4,800.

"The task force instead found used clothing estimated (to be worth) $31,000 or about P1.7 million," Calimlim said.

Marietta Zamoranos, Subic customs collector, issued a warrant of seizure and detention for the shipment.

Calimlim said the law prohibits the importation of used clothing due to health reasons and the need to protect the local garments industry.

He said the shipment has also violated the Customs and Tariff Code because of "misdeclaration."

The seizure was the first involving used clothes. The task force's earlier 11 seizures involved brand new vehicles declared as used vehicles, brand new automotive spare parts and electronic equipment. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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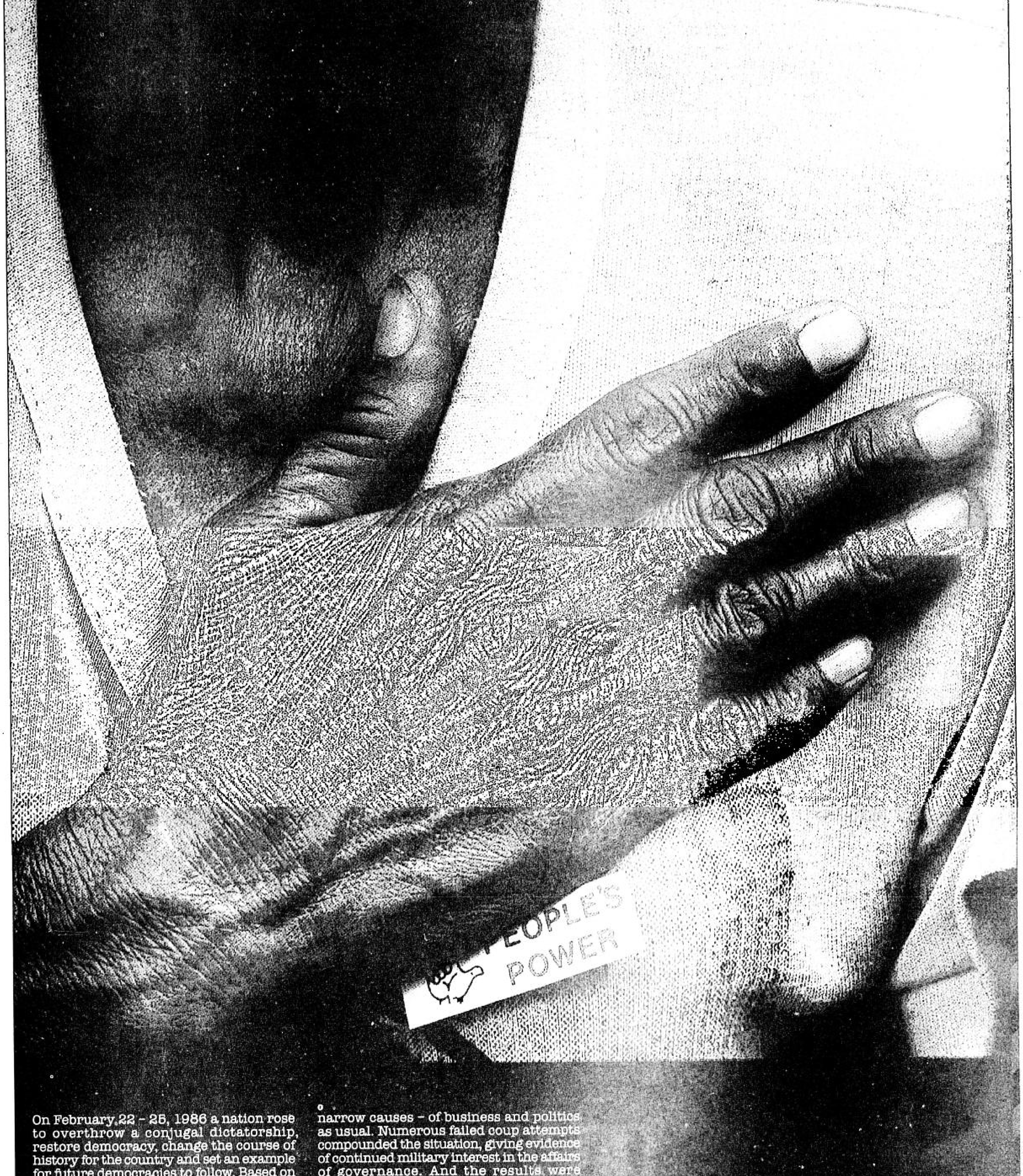
Reliving the Spirit of People Power.



On February 22 - 25, 1986 a nation rose to overthrow a conjugal dictatorship, restore democracy, change the course of history for the country and set an example for future democracies to follow. Based on electoral results, the People Power Revolution released the country from the grip of authoritarianism and restored freedom and opportunity to a nation.

People Power brought out the best in the Filipino - selflessness, courage, love of country, sacrifice. For four days in 1986, Filipinos all over the country acted as one, setting aside personal and political differences, to stand up for a cause greater than ourselves. People regardless of economic and social status linked arms and shared resources to bring about change and hope for a better future. People Power was our *bayanihan* value multiplied a million fold.

The results were dramatic. A new, democratically-elected government was installed and a Congress and independent Judiciary re-established. Basic freedoms were restored, media given more space to operate, and economic opportunity allowed to take hold. Investor confidence returned and the wheels of economic growth began to turn once again.

Yet, for all the promise that People Power held, not all our dreams were realized. We faltered along the way, turning back to old ways and habits of self-interest and narrow causes - of business and politics as usual. Numerous failed coup attempts compounded the situation, giving evidence of continued military interest in the affairs of governance. And the results were traumatic for the nation. Economic growth faltered, poor governance and corruption crept in, and poverty among the masses increased.

Today, 19 years after we once proved to ourselves and the rest of the world the positive power of unity and love of country, it's time once again to reflect and recapture that spirit which brought us here - the spirit of selflessness, courage, and sacrifice to make this country better now and for future generations. We must strive never to forget the sacrifices that led to our first People Power Revolt, or to allow others to re-shape the story of that great triumph. It is time to focus on making this country great again. Starting today, let us try to do something positive for our communities and for the country.

Let us put People Power to work again to fight the new enemy - the dictatorship of corruption, the dictatorship of poverty, and the dictatorship of opportunities stolen from a future generation.

The EDSA People Power Commission
25 February 2005

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

7:00 a.m. Flag Raising, People Power Monument,
EDSA cor. White Plains, Quezon City

Signing of Agreements for People Power Partnerships Against Corruption
People Power Monument, EDSA cor. White Plains, Quezon City
- *Philippine National Police - Makati Business Club and Bishops - Businessmen's Conference*
- *Department of National Defense - Makati Business Club*
- *Department of Health - National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections*
- *Department of Education - Ateneo School of Government*
- *Department of Interior and Local Government - Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and its National Secretariat for Social Action*
- *Department of Public Works and Highways - Caucus of Development NGO Networks*
- *Office of the Ombudsman and Presidential Anti-Graft Commission - Transparency and Accountability Network*
- *Bureau of Customs - Makati Business Club*
- *Bureau of Internal Revenue - Makati Business Club and Transparency and Accountability Network*

12:00 nn Holy Mass, EDSA Shrine, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Quezon City

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Palawan's 'guerrilla logging' suffers big blow

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Joint elements of the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the Bantay Puerto seized a total of 1,915.28 board feet of freshly cut *ipil* in Sitio Tugbuan, Barangay Binduyan here at about 10:15 a.m. on Wednesday.

PNP-CIDG and Bantay Puerto men led by PO2 Antonio Magbanua made the seizure on the strength of a search warrant issued by Regional Trial Court Branch 49 Judge Panfilo Salva for violation of Presidential Decree 705.

The *ipil* lumber pieces were confiscated from a lot owned by a certain engineer Henisto Go.

Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn lauded the seizure as another success of the city's drive against what he termed as "guerrilla loggers" in the city.

"This is what we are after now because we all know that illegal loggers have been stopped here," Hagedorn told the INQUIRER.

The logs are now impounded in a place called "Woodstock" beside the city hall, along with other logs and vehicles used in the transport of illegal logs confiscated by law enforcement agencies in the city.

Evidence

The lumber, Hagedorn said, will be used as evidence against the suspects and once the cases are over, they will be used in the city's different infrastructure projects.

"The vehicles will be left to rot there," he added.

The city mayor said that all logs impounded in the city hall are worth about P30 million, while the vehicles, including trucks and Sarao jeepneys, cost around P7.5 million.

Meanwhile, in two Visayas areas, authorities also seized at least 38,000 board feet of lumber.

About 37,000 board feet of lumber worth P700,000 were confiscated from M/L Fatima Editha I in Barangay Tangke, Talisay on Tuesday.

The police on Monday seized some 1,600 board feet of *lawaan* worth at least P30,000 in Barangay Catublihan, Hinunangan. The lumber was loaded in a dump truck owned by a local government unit.

Accident

The Coast Guard and environment officials stumbled upon the shipment of assorted lumber after M/L Fatima Editha I ran aground about a mile from the shore of Barangay Tangke, Talisay.

Petty Officer 2 Willy Alinsub of the Coast Guard detachment in Naga town said they went to the site after fishermen in Tangke informed them that a vessel had run aground.

Boat captain Rogelio Regala first submitted photocopies of the shipping documents, which indicated that the lumber came from Tawi-Tawi and were bound for Mandaue City, Cebu.

Loreto Rivac, Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) chief in Cebu City, said the shipper, one Jun Kajal forwarded on Tuesday afternoon the Certificate of Lumber Origin.

"Based on the entry of the documents, it seems that the shipment is legal and valid," Rivac said.

But Rivac said they could not confirm yet that the shipment was in order because they had yet to conduct an inventory to determine if the number of lumbers matched the allowed shipment.

Misdeclared

He said they suspected that the number might have exceeded what the shipper had declared in the document.

Rivac said they had ordered to hold the shipment and bring the lumbers to their office in Pier 3 for the actual scaling.

In Southern Leyte, the police were preparing to file charges following the seizure of 1,600 board feet of lumber in Sitio Bakilid, Barangay Catublihan in Hinunangan.

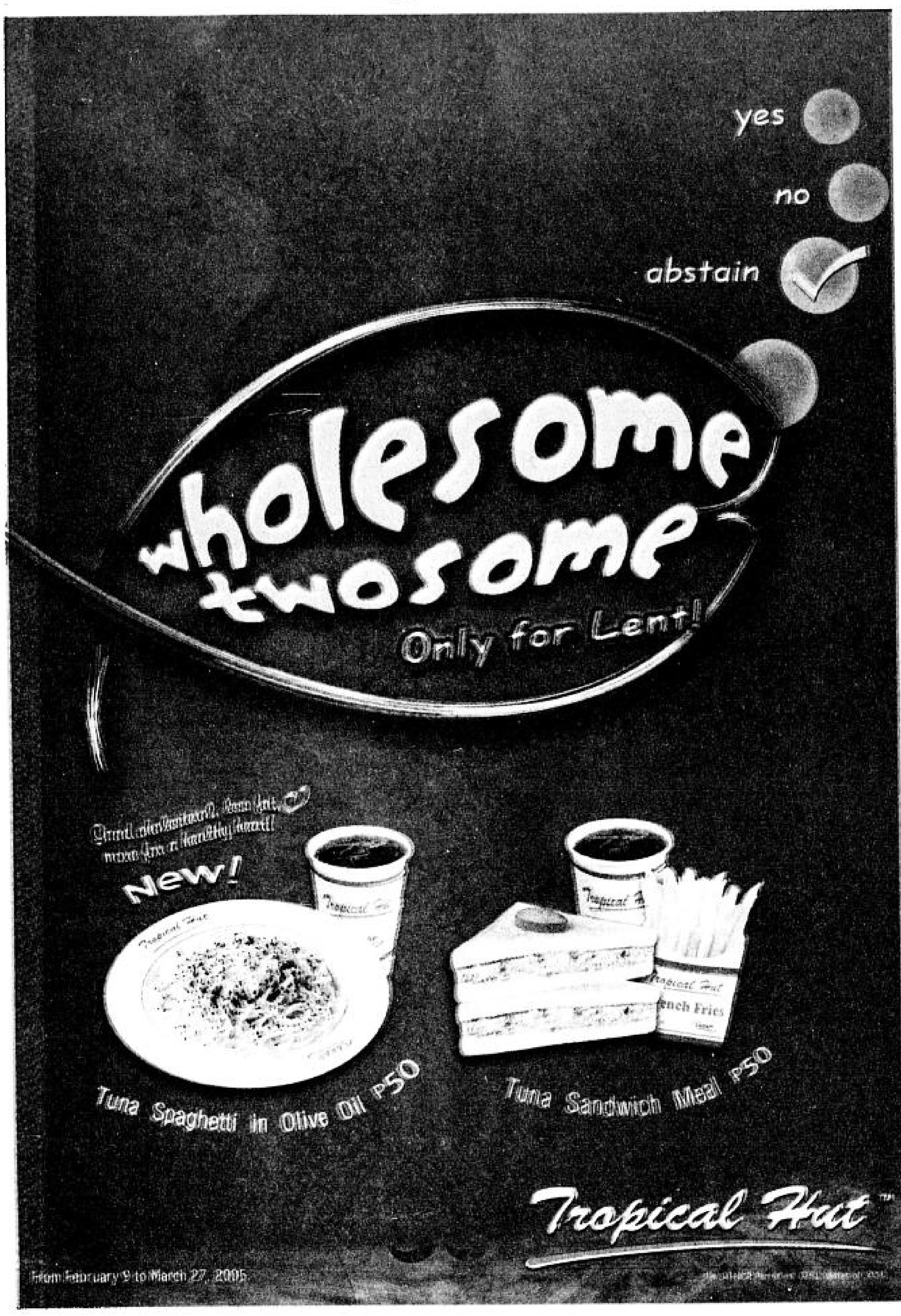
Supt. Alfredo Sabornido, Southern Leyte police director, said the lumbers were loaded on a dump truck with plate No. SNA-473, owned by the Hinundayan municipal government.

He said Hinundayan Mayor Joe Molina showed to him the contract, indicating that the dump truck was rented out to Jaime Olayan of Barangay Lunsudaan, Hinundayan, who owned the lumber.

"They may have no knowledge that (the dump truck) was used for the transport of the illegal lumber," he said.

Sabornido said renting out government vehicles is allowed under the Local Government Code.

Both the lumber and the truck were at the police station in Hinunangan pending filing of charges. *Geraldford P. Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Jhunnex Napallacan and Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau*



Illegal loggers, armed men hamper retrieval of logs in Quezon towns

LUCENA CITY—The ongoing government retrieval of drifted logs in the boundaries of Mauban and Real towns was being met with strong resistance from suspected illegal loggers being backed by armed men, the provincial environment and natural resources officer of Quezon said.

Emrich Borja, chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Quezon, said they discovered a still undetermined volume of drifted logs along Dakil River during the retrieval operation in the area, which started on Friday.

"But our operation is now being hampered by the strong resistance from illegal loggers in the area. What makes the operation more risky is the presence of armed men, apparently providing protection to the illegal loggers," Borja said.

He was not sure whether the armed men were New People's Army rebels operating in the area or just paid armed guards providing security to illegal loggers.

He said the DENR team had already recovered from the area 83 pieces of logs of assorted hardwood species, more than 100 pieces of formed lumber and two mini-band saws.

Stop operations

Borja said he had ordered his men to temporarily stop the operation on Saturday. But he again dispatched the same group on Monday with a composite team of police and Army soldiers as a support unit.

"There could be more drifted logs in the area. We want to recover them all as materials for the rehabilitation of the homeless calamity victims in northern Quezon," Borja said.

In December, the DENR also conducted a series of raids on suspected illegal loggers in Mauban and seized several mini-band saws and other timber-cutting equipment.

In another development, Borja chided the local officials of Gen. Nakar, Infanta and Real towns for the messy retrieval of drifted logs in inland areas.

"They allow their constituents to just cut and saw drifted logs. There was no systematic retrieval operation," said the environment official.

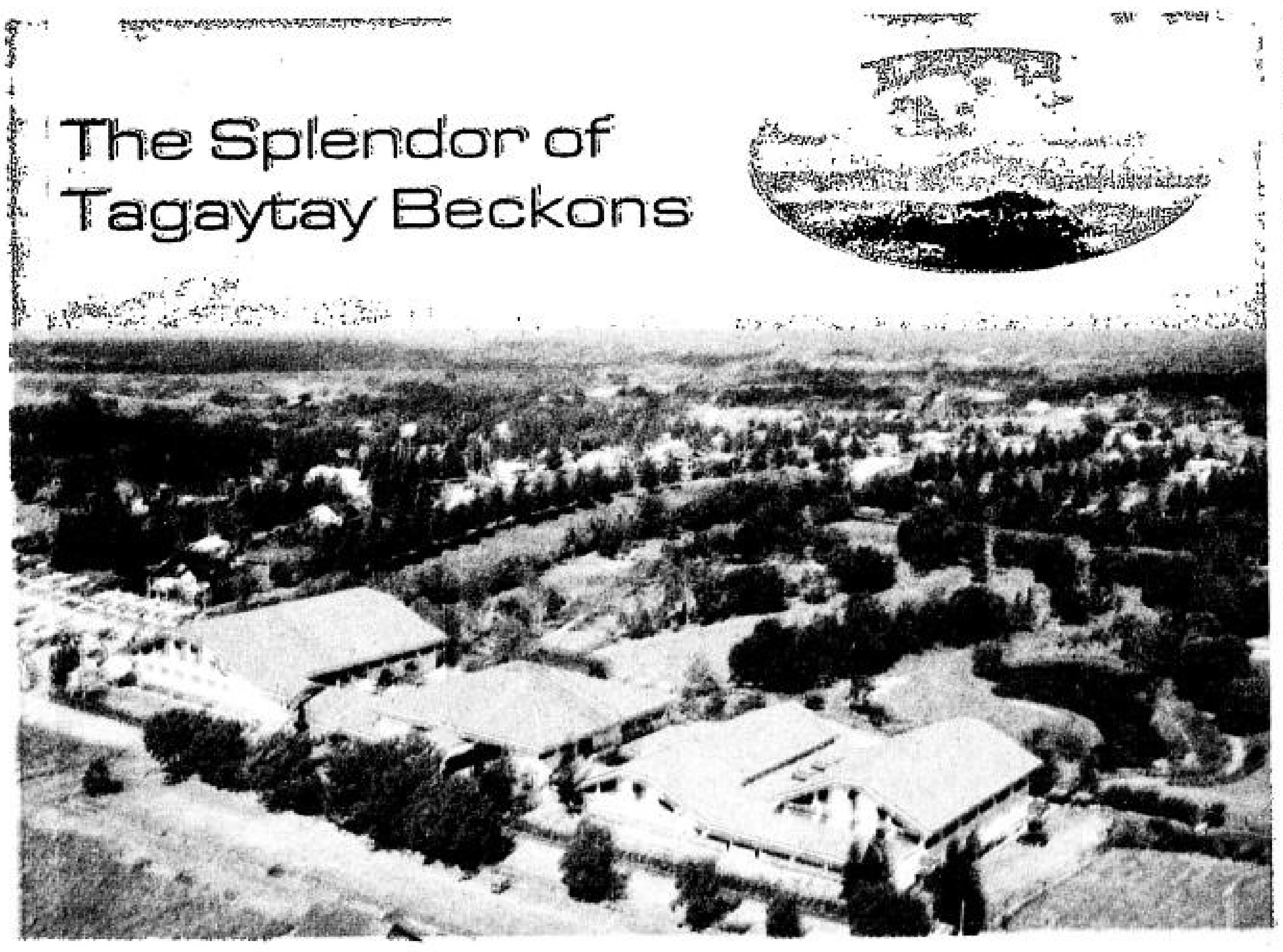
He advised local government officials that if they had no sufficient funds for orderly retrieval operations, they should just commission a reliable company to undertake the process of retrieval and cutting of lumber.

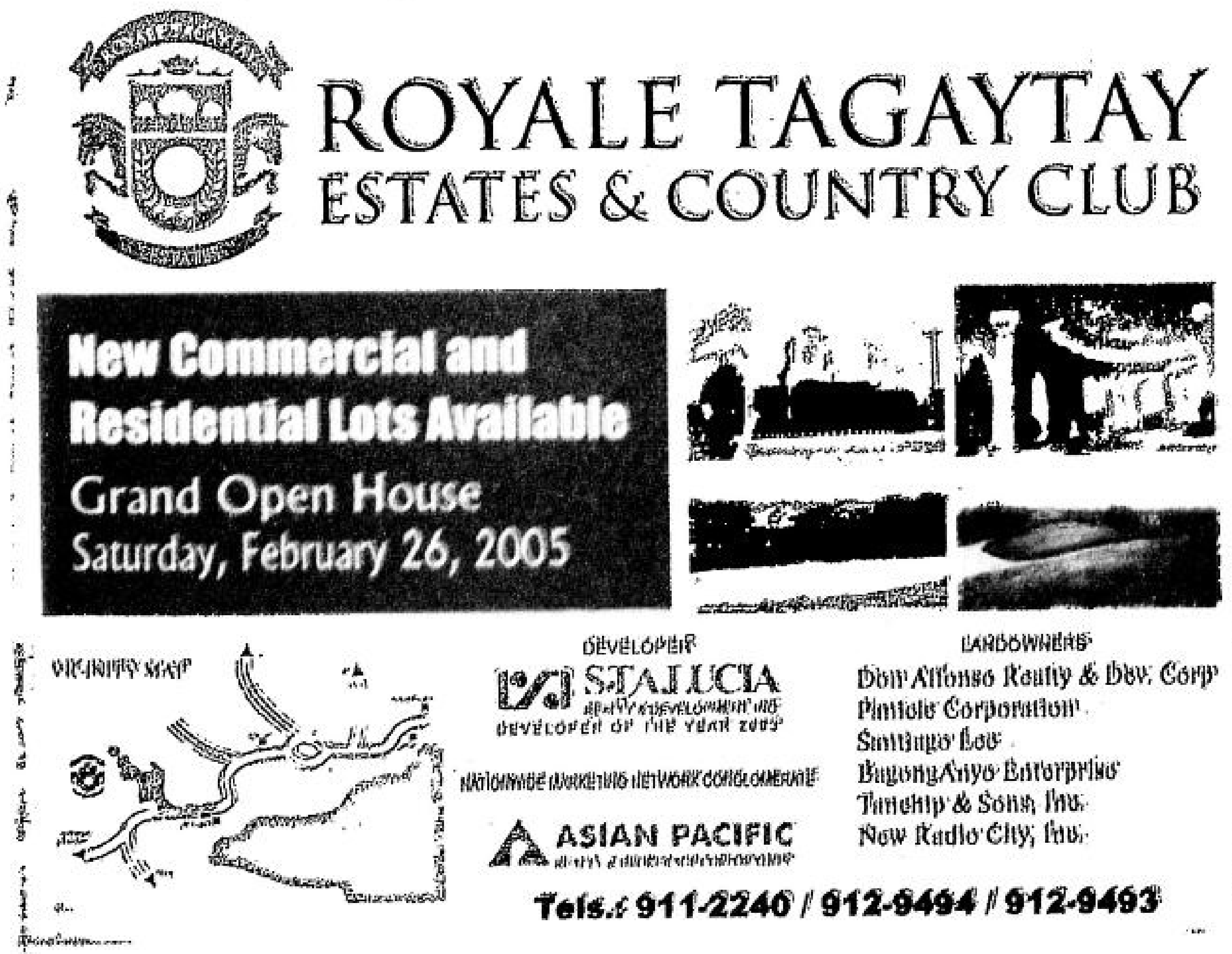
With the lack of funds for the retrieval of drifted logs in the coastal areas, Borja said the DENR commissioned the services of the Kasibu sawmill in Real town to do the whole process of retrieval down to the cutting of lumber.

He said the DENR has now a total stock of 77,000 board feet of assorted sawn lumber and 635 pieces of hardwood logs inside the Kasibu sawmill area.

He said 70 percent of the stocks will be distributed to calamity victims as certified by the local social welfare officer, while the remaining 30 percent will go to Kasibu as payment for the work.

"But sad to say that until now, we have yet to receive the list of beneficiaries from the local governments," Borja said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Ermita backs bypass road for Bulacan

EXECUTIVE Secretary Eduardo Ermita has requested the Department of Public Works and Highways to present plans to Bulacan mayors to widen the MacArthur Highway and build a bypass road for motorists who want to avoid the North Luzon Expressway.

Ermita said in a statement that he made the request after hearing of numerous complaints on heavy traffic on the MacArthur Highway from motorists who are avoiding the NLEx.

Toll at the repaired highway to the North has increased by at least 600 percent.

PUBLIC Works Undersecretary Manuel Bonoan (right) discusses plans for a bypass road with members of the League of Municipality of the Philippines Bulacan chapter. The need for a bypass road was raised after the closure of the exit and entry point in Barangay Tabe in Guiguinto, Bulacan. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Army tags NPA in ambush on ex-Red leader

MEXICO, Pampanga—An Army official on Thursday tagged the New People's Army in the Feb. 14 ambush here on a Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan commander and his seven companions, four of whom, including the commander's son, were killed.

Lt. Col. Ricardo Visaya, chief of the Army's 69th Infantry Battalion, said the details of the slay plan on Emmanuel "Von" Alejandrino were discovered in documents seized in a raid on an NPA safehouse in Barangay San Antonio here.

"We have obtained documents showing that they were the ones who undertook the ambush on Alejandrino," Visaya said.

He presented the recovered documents, firearms and other items during a press briefing in Bamban, Tarlac, on Thursday.

These include two M-16 Armalite rifles, an M653 rifle, a motorcycle, bullets, assorted medicines, backpacks containing personal belongings, an NPA flag, propaganda posters about Hacienda Luisita and antigovernment documents.

The NPA has not officially claimed or denied responsibility for the ambush. Neither has it admitted or disclaimed using the house owned by Alberto Canda whom Visaya said was the father-in-law of Darwin Sese, the vice platoon commander of the NPA unit in Mexico.

Canda denied owning or being the caretaker of the items found in his house. He accused soldiers of stealing valuables from his house and of conducting illegal searches in his house and in the houses of his neighbors.

Visaya said the documents, purportedly belonging to the NPA's southeastern Pampanga provincial committee led by one Alvin Salas, spelled out moves on how to carry out the ambush on the leader of the HMB, the armed wing of the old Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas.

However, the papers did not cite the reason Alejandrino, 47, was targeted for execution. Alejandrino, according to one of his brothers, did not commit any wrongdoing in the revolutionary movement.

"In fact, he [kept a low profile] after he lost in the [mayoral race] in the (May 10, 2004) elections in Arayat," the brother said.

Alejandrino's son Vladimir, 24, died in the attack. Their driver and two other men also died as a group of heavily armed men opened fire along a road in Barangay San Pablo here. *Tonette Orejas and Ronald Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Calabarzon cops arrest 9 suspected rob gang men

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Intelligence operatives of the Calabarzon police swooped down on the lair of a notorious robbery and hijacking syndicate and arrested nine of its suspected members, including a minor and an alleged agent of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Chief Supt. Oscar Calderon, Calabarzon police director, identified those arrested as Robin Bariring, 26, gang leader; Rene Jose Dimaranan, 25; Eduardo Dimaranan Jr., 23; Eduardo Dimaranan Sr., 56; Roberto Dimaranan, 33; Avelino Dimaranan, 45; Arnel Dimaranan, 29, and Ildefonso Dimaranan.

Calderon said members of the Regional Investigation and Intelligence Office led by Chief Insp. Jonathan Cabal went to the gang's alleged safehouse at the South Ville Subdivision in Barangay Sto. Tomas at about 11:45 p.m. to serve the warrants of arrest for Rene Jose and the minor who were both wanted for a murder case last year.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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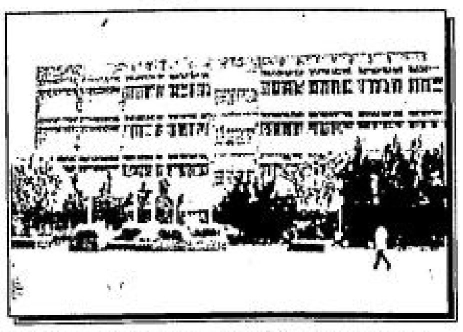

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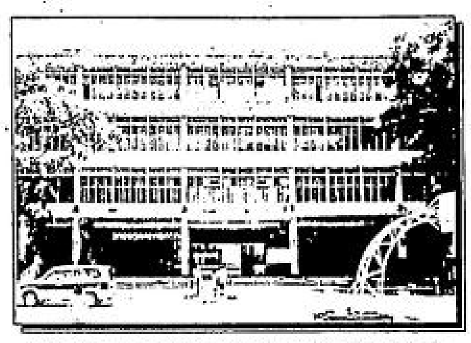

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GMA woos Cebu once more for revenue bills

By Jolene R. Bulambot and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

LAPULAPU CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose victory in Cebu carried her to a fresh term, appealed anew for Cebuanos' support, this time for her new tax measures.

"I ask the people of Cebu to join me and to join our legislators here to be united in the things we have to do in order to have a sustained development. There is no gain if there is no pain," she told reporters here in a recent visit.

Ms Arroyo made the appeal when told that some board members passed a resolution on Jan. 31 seeking the refinement of House Bill No. 3555 increasing the value-added tax and urging the exemption of basic services from taxation.

A multisectoral coalition was recently formed to oppose the increase in VAT, branding it as "unjust" and "antipoor."

Militant and Church groups in Western Visayas staged separate rallies last week to protest the passage of the bill.

"I'm sorry but if we don't raise P80 billion from legislative measures and P100 billion from administrative measures, we will not be able to fund all the things that Cebu needs because Cebu is one of the biggest beneficiaries of our infrastructure program," she said.

Mission in Cebu

The President was here to inaugurate the Multi-media Telecare Center of Lapulapu City, one of the 5,000 e-governance terminals interconnecting national and global agencies in e-governance.

President Arroyo said that while she overwhelmingly won in Cebu, she believed that the people voted for her so she could exercise political will to determine what was good for the country.

Cebu gave Ms Arroyo a winning margin of 1.1 million votes in the 2004 elections.

But Ms Arroyo said that if the government would have no new revenues, the country would forever be poor.

"The fact that our stock market is resilient and the dollar market... is modest is because we have been doing this," she added.

But President Arroyo said she did not keep secret the need to raise revenues so that the country could stop borrowing all the time to finance its development.

She, however, said the government listened to the inputs of other sectors through the public hearings being conducted in Congress.

Ms Arroyo said Sen. Ralph Recto, Senate committee chair on ways and means, was hearing about 60 different individuals and entities so that by the time he came up with his report, he had heard everyone.

Bishop's appeal

Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra, however, asked the senators to uphold their dignity as Christians and active members of the Church before approving the two-percent increase in VAT.

"Listen to the dictates of your conscience that tells you that your power and position came from God, hence, it is a sacred trust, which means the common good of your people should always come first before your own," Navarra said during the anti-VAT rally in front of the Fountain of Justice.

He said the protest action indicated that the public was aware of the adverse effects of increasing the VAT.

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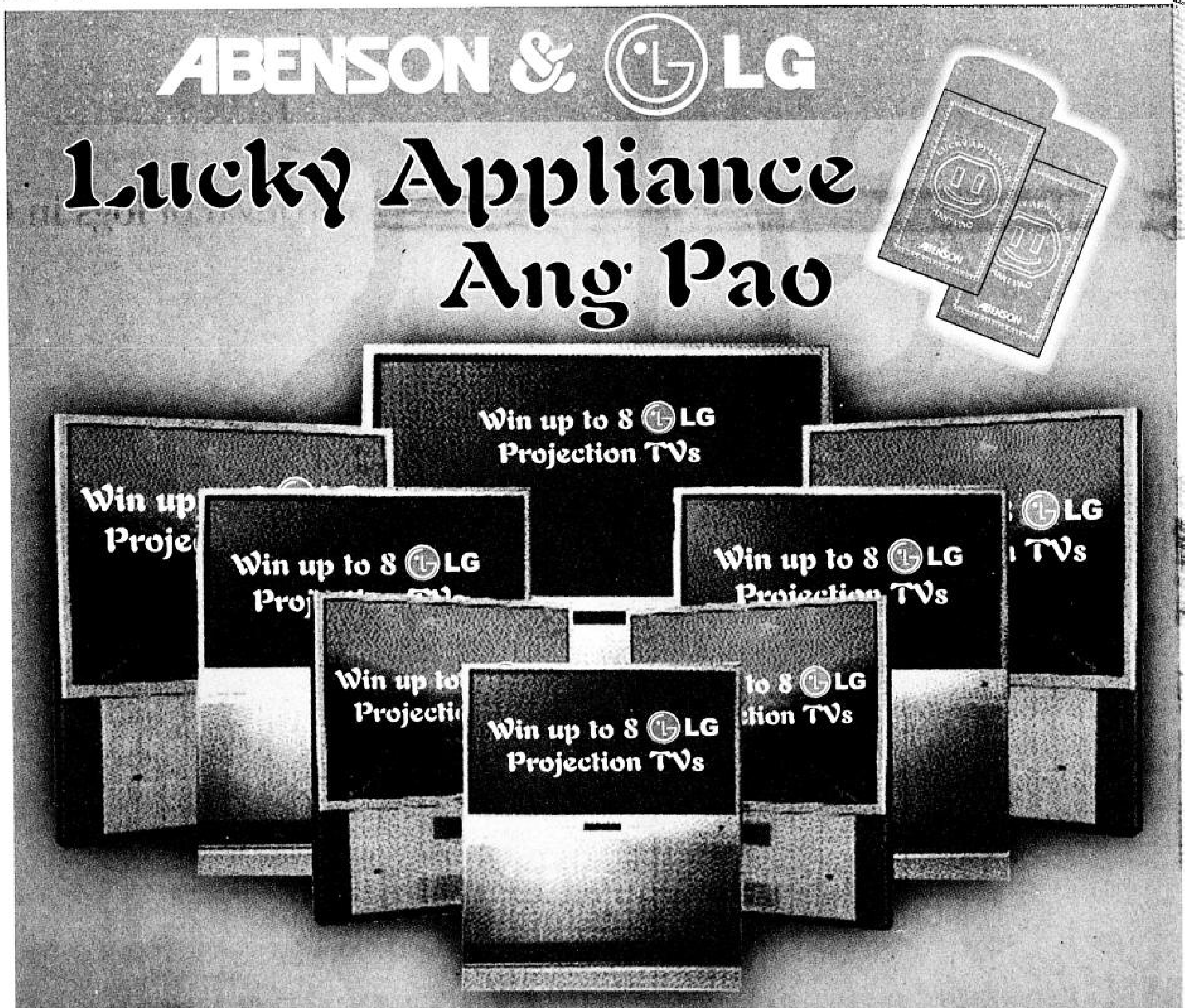

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Colonel still not talking on plot to kill Imelda

From page A1

thus exposing the officer to her lavish lifestyle.

Politicized

Ironically, witnessing Imelda's lavish lifestyle would "politicize" Morales and make him accept the mission of killing the person he was sworn to protect.

A stoic Morales read on television the names of his co-plotters, among them Col. Gregorio Honasan and Lt. Col. Eduardo Kapunan, who were both assigned to then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile as chief for security and chief for intelligence, respectively.

Marcos also presented to the media three officers, namely, Lt. Col. Jake Malajacan, Maj. Saulito Aromin and Maj. Ricardo Brillantes, whom he identified as among the plotters.

Malajacan and Aromin, who were commanding officers of the 16th and 49th Infantry Battalions respectively, were supposed to have led their troops in commando attacks, with Morales and perhaps other plotters, coordinating the maneuvers from inside the Palace.

It was the height of "treason," an angry Marcos said. He also said Enrile and Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, vice chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, who had withdrawn support from him just three hours earlier, were part of the plot.

Trail of regrets

The coup plot was also a defining moment for the AFP, especially for members of the Reform AFP Movement (RAM before it was renamed Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa) who were feted as heroes.

But it also left behind a trail of misgivings and regrets, which many have refused to talk about nearly two decades after it happened.

"There was just too much pain. How can they bring back lost careers, broken families and wasted friendships?" a wife of one of the key players told the INQUIRER.

She said the 1986 uprising planted the seed for the succeeding plots, which, whether true or not, had affected the families of the participants.

Worse cases

She said her husband's promotion was delayed, and his career suffered. "But there were worse cases. That should be written, that should be published," she said.

In fact, other officers, who were said to be part of the 1986 coup plot, are not known to talk about it, either.

Malajacan has retired, while Brillantes has remained with the Army. Aromin, however, has passed away. He was then commander of the 103rd Army Brigade in Basilan when he succumbed to cardiac arrest four years ago.

Even published accounts about the 1986 People Power uprising gloss over the plot to kill Ferdinand and Imelda.

No such plot

In his book "Breakaway," newsman Cecilio Arillo said Marcos' reaction to the coup plot made the plotters smile.

"There was no such plot to seize power. There was a plan, part of a larger scenario, but it was contingent on the arrest of Enrile and Ramos," Arillo wrote.

He said that in the event that Enrile and Ramos were arrested and brought to Malacañang, a rescue team would enter the Palace and "liberate them."

"But there was no plan to harm, much less kill, the First Couple," Arillo wrote.

No Edsa holiday in Marcos country

By Cristina Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAOAG CITY—Today, the 19th anniversary of the 1986 Edsa "people power" uprising that drove strongman Ferdinand Marcos out of power, is a regular working day at the provincial capitol despite a Malacañang announcement declaring it a national holiday.

"It's business as usual. The others can go on a holiday. I don't see anything to celebrate (on the 25th) in the province," Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the ousted president's son, said during Wednesday's press briefing.

Marcos hesitated briefly when asked if the Edsa anniversary would be a regular working day for capitol employees.

"What is our mandate? Will the employees come in? What does the Civil Service (Commission) say?" Marcos asked lawyer Irineo Martinez, the provincial administrator, who attended the briefing.

Feb. 25 has always been a working day for capitol employees, Martinez said. He did not say whether the practice began when Marcos was elected governor in 1998.

Since Thursday, the CSC office here has received queries by phone, asking whether capitol employees are compelled to report for work despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation declaring the Edsa anniversary a national holiday.

Cecilia Bareng, a CSC senior personnel specialist, said government personnel working beyond regular hours could claim a "compensatory time off" instead of an overtime pay.

According to a joint circular of the CSC and the Department of Budget and Management, a compensatory time off refers to the number of hours or days an employee is excused from reporting for work with full pay and benefits. It is a nonmonetary benefit given to employees instead of claiming an overtime pay.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, the deposed president's eldest daughter, said Edsa left a legacy of hopelessness despite its vision to spur change in people's lives.

"Edsa is a sad day in our family's history. But whether it's sad or not, I hope it can raise people's living conditions," she told Bombo Radyo-Laoag on Thursday.

'The real Revolution is yet to be'

From page A1

was also known as the Adopt-A-School Act and it sought to generate wider private sector support for public education by providing a gross tax deduction equivalent to 150 percent of the value of the donation.

The Adopt-A-School Act tacitly recognizes the fact that public education needs all the help it can get from any source in order to arrest—and hopefully reverse—its alarming decline in quality.

However, the magnitude of the problem defies description. Ask any educator, which is what the FWWPP did in seminars we have conducted. But if we instead view the issue from the grass roots, then making qualitative changes in our children's journey of learning in school seems quite attainable.

Learning from Edsa I

Simply put, it is infinitely easier for one community—which includes the teachers in school—to help the pupils in its public school learn to read, write and think better than it is to, say, lobby for legislative education reform in Congress.

The lessons we learned in Edsa I reinforce this fact.

Every Filipino who risked his life in front of the Marcos military's heavy armored columns did so because people he knew, his friends and neighbors were willing to do the same. Maybe the international ramifications of what he was doing at that precise moment was farthest from his mind, but his sense of oneness with his own community was probably at its strongest.

Gathering together as one community to adopt a public school may not be as dramatic, but the intrinsic selflessness is just as heroic.

Best weapon against poverty

These then are the elements that go into what we call an Education Revolution launched on Oct. 17, 2002.

In the first two years, we have realized that this revolution has to run on two legs—the community around each school adopting and caring for the school, and "Mentoring the Mentors" to awaken our educators to their critical role in shaping the values of future generations of Filipinos.

On the right leg, we have succeeded in initiating the adoption of 200 elementary schools in various provinces by a diverse mix of entities—an independent power producer, local chapters of socio-civic groups, large multinational corporations, local ladies circles, international and local NGOs, an Air Force base, and even plain People Power-inspired individuals who truly believe that education is the best weapon against poverty.

But this is only a drop since there are about 41,000 public schools waiting to be adopted.

Mentoring mentors

On the left leg, we have "Mentoring the Mentors," a comprehensive teacher formation and skills building program that has two phases.

The first one begins with five days of intensive and highly interactive sessions carefully calibrated to reinforce the teacher-participant's understanding of the role she plays in shaping the character of her students. Equally, the sessions involve professional skills improvement workshops.

The second phase of "Mentoring the Mentors" calls for a one-year monitoring period using the action plans which the teacher-participants drafted at the end of the five-day sessions as benchmarks. The overarching objective is to inculcate a culture of mentoring among today's teachers.

Pilot program in Iloilo

Under the guidance of program director Chinit Rufino and national coordinator Evelina Mejillano, "Mentoring the Mentors" was implemented as a pilot program for the entire Iloilo City Schools division in 2003.

Since then, the response has been overwhelming. We recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the nationally organized Philippine Association for Teacher Education who found so much merit in "Mentoring the Mentors" that they wanted the program implemented nationwide through their various regional units.

Since then, more sessions have been conducted for teacher-participants in Southern Tagalog (Region IV) and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and for entire DepEd schools divisions in Laguna and Negros Occidental.

Most significantly, a special introductory session designed exclusively for directors and superintendents from Western Visayas (Region VI), Central Visayas (Region VII) and Eastern Visayas (Region VIII) happened on Feb. 16 at the Ecotech Park in Lahug, Cebu City.

FWWPP president Maria Lim-Ayuyao, herself an educator, has been shepherding this program by actually attending the sessions to provide inspiration and encouragement.

More than 600 public school principals and master teachers have underwent "Mentoring the Mentors" so far. This translates into more than 600 schools benefiting from an enabling learning environment which an inspired school head brings. And the numbers continue to grow.

The FWWPP is by no means claiming to be the only player in this revolution. Literally every NGO in the country has an education improvement program in its set of initiatives. Just recently, the Department of Education recognized 70 entities that have been working tirelessly for better education in the Philippines.

Other players in public ed

Made up mostly of private business organizations that firmly believe in corporate social responsibility, these groups have made substantial contributions to public education. The DepEd gave each of the awardees a replica of the Rizal Elementary School in Bacolod circa 1901 specially cast for the occasion by noted sculptor Lanelle Abueva-Fernando.

The list reads like a who's who in Philippine business: Aboitiz Foundation, Ayala Land Inc., Coca-Cola Philippines Foundation Inc., Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc., Holy Gardens Group of Companies, International Exchange Bank, International Bazaar Foundation Inc., Johnson and Johnson and Mirant Philippines.

Petron Foundation Inc., Pfizer Philippines Foundation Inc., Plan International, Philip Morris Phils., Manufacturing Inc., Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc., San Miguel Corp. and Tan Yan Kee Foundation Inc., AMA Foundation Inc., Ayala Corp. Caltex Philippines Inc., Dole-Stanfilco Foods Corp., Intel Tech Phils., Microsoft Philippines and STI Inc.

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Firebrands

A revolution needs catalysts—or more correctly, firebrands. There are quite a few notable volunteer service groups who have done exceptional community development work. In particular, the University of the Philippines "Gurong Pahinungod" program and the Jesuit Volunteer Philippines Foundation are exemplary in this regard.

These organizations do not lack in volunteers who are ready, willing and able to immerse themselves in communities. Limited resources, however, have hampered them from making a bigger social impact.

This is why the FWWPP is looking into engaging these intensely motivated young men and women to focus the community toward education.

Real revolution

All it takes is for every civic organization, every business entity, every resource holder and all stakeholders who share our advocacy of the Education Revolution to support just one or two of these volunteers to work in their target communities all across the country.

In the truest sense of People Power we would be well on our way to revolutionizing Philippine education.

With more and more civilians awakened to the education needs of our country and more and more inspired teachers, can our social transformation, the real Revolution, be far behind?

It's all over; Marcos flees!

THE HAPPY ENDING to the four-day People Power revolt that ousted the dictator, his family and cronies was bannered by the then two-month-old Philippine Daily Inquirer, which was very much a part of the ordinary people's jubilation in the grounds of Malacañang. PDI PHOTO

Militant group unhappy; Loi says forget 'Uno, Dos'

From page A1

if Congress takes steps to cut payments for its foreign debts, including those incurred by the Marcos regime.

Out in the cold

"The current regime has failed to live up to the lessons of Edsa. The Arroyo administration is practically reversing everything that Edsa stood for," Reyes said.

He said it appeared that "after People Power, the people were left out in the cold."

Reyes also pointed out that the government had yet to compensate the victims of human rights violations under martial law.

"It is no wonder why many people are already disenchanted with the official celebration of the Edsa uprising," he said. "It's not surprising that Ms Arroyo has to ferry government employees to her official celebration, just to make it appear that she actually enjoys popular support."

Forget Edsa

Sen. Luisa "Loi" Estrada would rather forget about the Edsa revolts, including the one that led to the ouster of her husband, President Joseph Estrada, in January 2001.

Pointing out that her husband continued to languish in detention, the senator said "the elite-controlled Edsa Uno and Edsa Dos were dismal failures" for bringing misery to her family and false hopes and oppression to poor Filipinos.

"It would be the height of insensitivity on the part of some people, especially the elite, to proclaim the benefits that the country supposedly gained from Edsa in the light of the suffering of the vast majority of Filipinos," she said.

Loi Estrada said that 19 years and two "successful Edsa revolts" later, the lives of ordinary Filipinos had gone "from bad to worse."

"Those who benefited principally from the democratic gains that we supposedly won 19 years ago failed to translate these to economic and livelihood opportunities for the benefit of the greater number of our people. As a result, the vast majority of them remain mired in poverty and despair," she said.

She also said that in the hands of the elite, People Power had become "a license to trample" on the rule of law and "commit atrocious excesses" against the people.

Loi said that far from strengthening good governance, the Philippines had become "an international embarrassment, with its record of being the second most corrupt country in the world."

She warned Malacañang to "be wary of the frustration and anger building inside our people," which, she said, could "erupt anytime."

Different bishop

Her son and co-senator, Jinggoy Estrada, made a similar observation, saying the abuses and irregularities that brought down the Marcos dictatorship were unabated.

As though to underscore the apparent changes in the Edsa commemoration, the archbishop of Manila will not celebrate the noon Mass marking the last day of the 1986 revolt.

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Bernardino Cortez will celebrate the noon Mass at the Edsa Shrine today in place of Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, who is in the Vatican, said Peachy Yamsuan, spokesperson of the Manila archbishop's office.

"It has always been the Manila archbishop who celebrated the 12 o'clock Mass. But it's only because of the meeting at the Vatican that Archbishop Rosales cannot be at Edsa," Yamsuan said in a phone interview.

Yamsuan noted that the former rector of the Edsa Shrine, now Bataan Bishop Socrates Villegas, celebrated the afternoon Mass during last year's Edsa anniversary, while Rosales celebrated the noon Mass.

Sin's presence

When he was the Manila archbishop, Jaime Cardinal Sin did not miss an Edsa anniversary Mass, Yamsuan said.

It was Sin who called on the faithful to gather in the streets to protect the opposition against Marcos, which ultimately led to Edsa I.

Sin, who has since retired and is spending most of his time at his official residence in Villa San Miguel because of his frail health, may visit the Edsa Shrine during the day, Yamsuan said. *Reports from Norman Bordadora, Michael Lim Ubac and Nikko Dizon*

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18 of 32 Pasay execs turn in courtesy resignation

By Nikko Dizon

IN AN unprecedented move, 18 of 32 department heads of the Pasay City government decided to turn in courtesy resignation letters to Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad after the local chief executive reprimanded them on Tuesday for their failure to provide "true public service" to the city's residents.

The 12 personally handed their letters to Trinidad, who regarded the move as something the people of Pasay should be happy about.

"It was an admission on our part that service should be improved," Trinidad said.

The mayor added that he would have to evaluate each department head's performance first before deciding whose resignations he would accept or decline, except that of Public Information Chief Janet Deriada.

Deriada had spoken with the mayor and said her resignation was "irrevocable" for, personal reasons.

Apart from Deriada, police chief Sr. Supt. Rosendo Franco, traffic chief Encio Mateo and City Administrator Ernestina Carbajal had also tendered their resignation letters. Carbajal, who had worked with Trinidad for several years, is the highest-ranking official in the group. A city administrator traditionally functions as the alter ego of the mayor at City Hall.

Mateo said he had enjoined all the department heads to submit their courtesy resignation letters to give Trinidad a free hand in choosing who he wants to head the different departments, to help him carry out his vision for the city. He said the move should not be regarded as antagonistic toward the mayor.

"On the contrary, it was a show of support for the mayor because we want to give him a free hand in choosing who he wants to run the different departments," he added.

Mateo has worked with the mayor since he was a city councilor in the 1990s when Trinidad was then vice mayor.

For her part, Carbajal said that there were areas that City Hall could still improve on, adding that their move was done voluntarily.

Trinidad said he had pointed out the "deficiencies" of department heads during their first meeting for the year on Tuesday.

It was the first time, he said, that he lost his temper in front of his officials.

"There were areas of public service that had been neglected that need more attention. And they know among themselves who are performing and who are not," Trinidad said.

Martin Soriano charged

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation filed before the Department of Justice yesterday kidnapping and robbery charges against its former asset Martin Soriano.

The kidnapping complaint stemmed from the accusation of former police informer Mary "Rosebud" Ong that Soriano, with five other men, abducted her and her mother, Ogay, in March 1998.

The two of them were only released after 14 hours of detention when Supt. John Campos, Ong's former handler, allegedly intervened and threatened Soriano.

Robbery complaints were also filed because Soriano and his men allegedly took P99,500 of Ong's valuables during the kidnapping, according to Alejandro Tenerife, deputy director for special investigation services.

Undercover

Ong earlier said that she only asked the NBI to investigate the kidnapping incident after Soriano's arrest because at the time of her and her mother's release, she was still working as a police asset and needed to keep her cover.

Soriano was arrested on Jan. 31 this year after a woman identified as Caroline Guillen accused him of kidnapping for ransom. His arrest stirred up controversy after several Manila policemen were accused of being his protectors, a claim that the policemen denied.

Meanwhile, NBI investigators lamented yesterday media reports that identified Soriano as an NBI agent, and not a confidential or intelligence agent, giving the impression that he passed all requirements for becoming a full-fledged NBI agent.

"It's so difficult to become an NBI agent and yet Soriano is being named as one. That's a disgrace. The name of the bureau is being dirtied with its association to Soriano," said a special investigator.

₱5-M pirated software seized

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A NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agent holds up hard evidence of software piracy allegedly found in several computer shops at the SM City North Edsa in Quezon City. NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco (2nd from left) says pirated software and computers seized from the shops amounted to some P5 million.

ERIK ARAZAS

By Leila B. Salaverria

COMPUTER users, beware.

If you are using illegally acquired software, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) may be after you.

The NBI presented yesterday to media over P5 million in computers and illegally acquired software seized in a raid conducted in cooperation with the Microsoft company.

The items included 52 computers, 14 monitors, 14 keyboards and 21 installers. These were seized from several shops at the cyberzone of SM North Edsa in Quezon City.

The shops were identified as Computers n' Options, Great Lakes Computer Center, Green Lakes Computer Center, Save on Surplus, and Dynamic Ultra Tech.

The raid was launched after the NBI verified reports that the stores were selling unlicensed software.

Members of the NBI's Intellectual Property Rights Division under Justo Yap were armed with a search warrant from Quezon City Judge Hilario Laqui.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco hoped that the seizure of the computers and unlicensed software would warn people against buying pirated programs.

"They are committing a crime if they use this kind of software," he said.

Water rationing in Metro

By Tina G. Santos

AN OFFICIAL of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) has urged the public to conserve water as she expressed concern over the continuous decline of the water elevation of Angat Dam, the capital's main reservoir.

According to Macra Cruz, MWSS deputy administrator, the rate of decrease in the dam's water level is faster compared to the decline in the same period last year. "The water level decreases at the rate of 1 meter per three days," she said.

At least one million people would be affected by the water supply reduction which the MWSS expects to implement when summer officially starts next month. Affected areas include parts of Quezon City, the Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela area, Manila, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Pasay and Cavite.

Cruz said the low level was also due to the continued blockage of the Umiray tunnel which used to provide an additional 20 percent to the domestic water supply.

The tunnel had been clogged with logs and debris as an aftermath of several typhoons that lashed Luzon last December. As of 12 noon yesterday, the water level at Angat was marked at 193.9 meters. The critical level had been pegged at 180 meters.

Leak repairs, disconnection of illegal water connections, and pipe replacements are ongoing as part of conservation efforts.

TSINOY POP STARS

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza awards trophies and medals to the winners of the First Tsinoy Pop Star held recently as part of the Chinese New Year Celebrations. The awardees are (left to right from Atienza) first placer Doronet Yu, 2nd placer Daphne Chiu, both from Chang Kai Shek College, and 3rd placer Willord Zhen Wei Cai. Cai, along with fourth placer Fredison Lo (3rd from left) are from Hope Christian High School. George Maung, 5th placer, (2nd from left) is from St. Jude Catholic School. Also present during the awarding ceremony are Miss Chinatown Mary Grace Sy and Chinatown Development Authority's Michael Lim (left).

Las Piñas mayor fumes over smoking

THINK twice before lighting a cigarette in Las Piñas.

Mayor Imelda Aguilar has ordered the strict enforcement of the city's antismoking ordinance.

A fuming Aguilar assembled a composite team to enforce the measure and ensure that business establishments concerned would comply with the order.

Under Ordinance No. 353-97, smoking, which is defined as any "lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or smoking paraphernalia, whether or not being puffed, inhaled or smoked" is banned in public and private schools, elevators and government run, owned or controlled agencies or offices.

It is also strictly prohibited in storage areas of combustible chemicals, liquids and gases.

Gas stations, hospitals, clinics, health centers, medical laboratories, movie houses, auditoriums, barber shops, beauty parlors and public comfort rooms are classified as no smoking areas.

Smoking is also banned in public utility vehicles such as buses, AUVs, jeepneys and taxis.

Commercial establishments such as restaurants, malls, supermarkets, canteens, food courts, markets, night clubs and factories are required to provide smoking areas, with proper signage to guide the public.

"Spare no one in enforcing the ordinance," Aguilar told members of the enforcement team.

Individual violators face penalties of up to P500 with community service. Establishments found in violation of the measures face a fine of up to P5,000. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

METROBRIEFS

No number coding

THE NUMBER coding scheme will be suspended today in commemoration of the Edsa People Power 1 anniversary. Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said they would be closing a lane on the northbound part of Edsa for the anniversary activities. The Makati local government also announced the suspension of the scheme in the city. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Smiling Metro Aides

FLORENCIA Tan and 234 other Metro Aides found a reason to smile yesterday when First Gentleman Mike Arroyo gave them new dentures as part of his "Bagong Ngiti sa Dating Ngebu (Bungi)" project. Ligaya Cagurangan, administrative officer of the MMDA Metropolitan Landscaping Management Office, said half of their 2,000 metro aides are in need of dentures. "Most of the street sweepers are relatively old, with ages ranging from 40 to 65," Cagurangan said. She added that the metro aides' low salaries prevent them from buying new dentures. "The sweepers even look older without teeth," Cagurangan said. "With new dentures, they would look young again." *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Unida concert

THE UNIDA Ecumenical Church kicks off its 10th year celebration with an anniversary concert dubbed "Isang Dekada ng Pagpupuri at Pagpapasalamat" on Feb. 27 at the Meralco Theater in Ortigas, Pasig City, at 6 p.m. The Unida Ecumenical Chancel Choir, composed of young urban professionals, takes center stage with their rendition of Filipino love songs and Broadway hits.

Check threat text messages first, warns PNP

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE NEXT time your mobile phone beeps and flashes a message warning that a mall or a hotel could be bombed anytime, check the information first with the police.

"Text us to confirm reports," said Director Avelino Razon Jr., chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO)." The public may forward the text to our operations center to verify the report."

In the past days, cellular phones all over Metro Manila had been receiving and passing on text messages warning of impending terror attacks in upscale hotels, malls and other public areas.

Another forwarded message said the terror texts were circulated by the daughter of a longtime politician.

Rumors then spread that the police were out to arrest her.

"Those are not true, we never named her, and we are not going to arrest her," said Razon in a press conference yesterday.

The messages began circulating in the wake of the Valentine's Day bombings, allegedly the handiwork of the Abu Sayyaf Group.

The bombings killed eight people and injured at least 150 in the cities of Makati, Davao and General Santos.

"These messages continue to sow fear, confusion and terror among the public, and at the same time, discredit the PNP, because there are also rumors that these reports came from PNP intelligence officers," he added.

The Metro Manila police chief said such messages prompted the NCRPO to detail additional policemen in areas identified as the next targets of terrorists.

"We are not saying that we should just disregard these messages. We are asking citizens to be vigilant," said Razon. The NCRPO chief said the public may call Patrol 117, the emergency hotline of the Department of Interior and Local Government, or text the PNP through 2920.

Metro Manila residents may also call the NCRPO operations center through 838-1505. Text messages may also be sent to 0917-890-9494 and 0917-847-5757.

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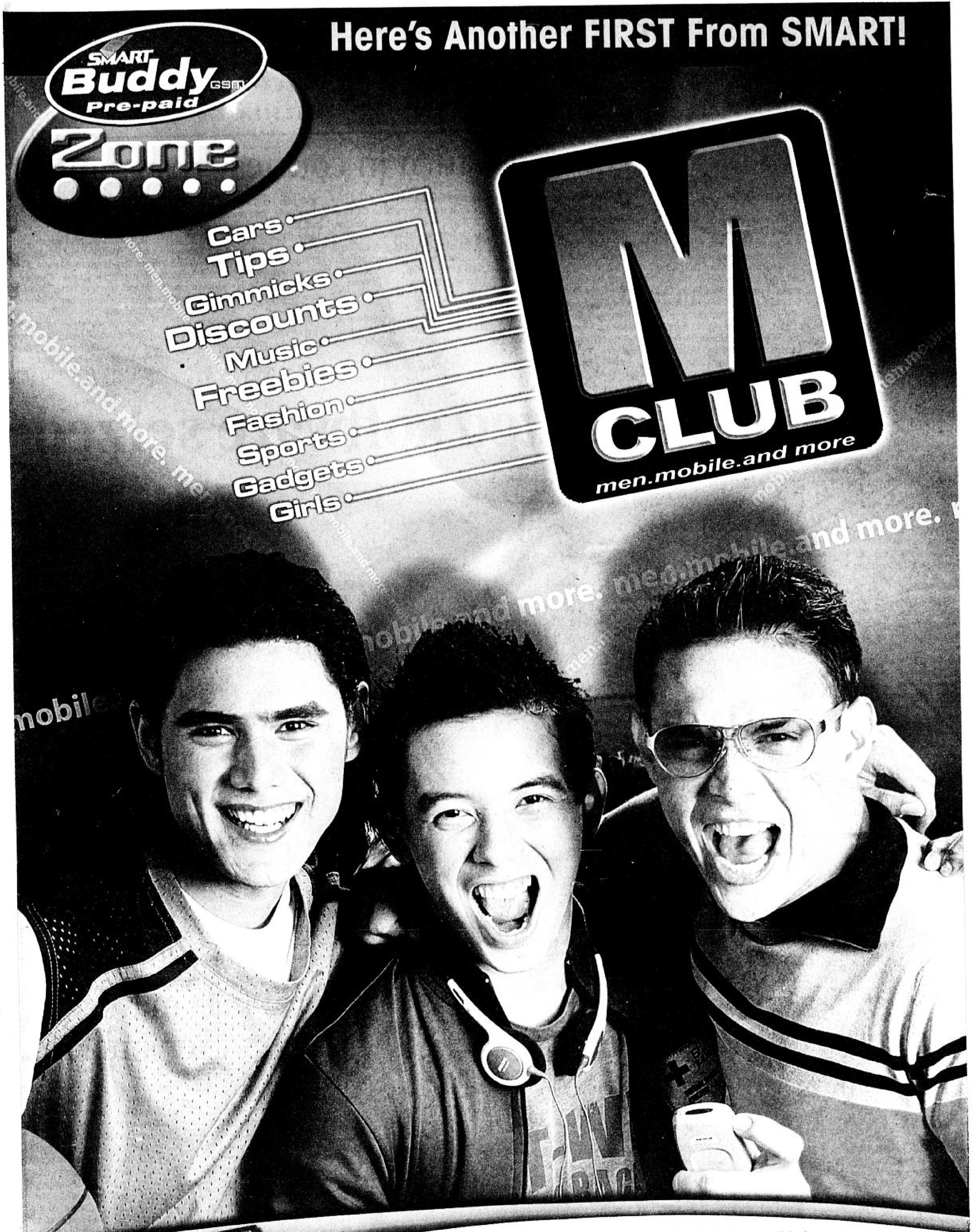
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BASKETBALL: NBA-Sixers vs Knicks; 8 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); STAR Sports; Mavs vs Kings; 10:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Atlantic Division rivals Philadelphia and New York tangle in the Garden even as Dallas and Sacramento square off for the third time in this campaign.
NBA All-Star Saturday; 6 p.m. (r); Solar Sports—Relive all the side events during All-Star Saturday.
US NCAA-Wisconsin vs Michigan State; 8 a.m. (r-4 p.m.); Purdue vs Indiana; 6:30 p.m. (r); ESPN—The Big Ten takes center stage as the Badgers face the Spartans while the Boilermakers clash against the Hoosiers.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

ALL-FILIPINO OPEN

Reyes crashes out with 2nd loss

REYES is defanged again by a Filipino. PDI PHOTO

By Marlon Bernardino, *Contributor*

THAT EFREN "Bata" Reyes is a vulnerable target for local players was again underscored late Wednesday night.

The top-seeded Reyes, the world's highest-earning cue master last year, yielded to *kabalen* Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat, 9-5, in the loser's bracket and crashed out of the Hope All-Filipino Billiards Open at the Studio 13 in Quezon City.

The 50-year-old Reyes, a 9-4 victim of Antonio "Gaga" Gabica on Tuesday, bowed out of the chase for the P500,000 top purse.

The 41-year-old Luat took an early 2-0 lead, but Reyes, the pacesetter in this year's money list in the US pool circuit with earnings of $46,919, managed to tie the game at 2-2 and again at 3-3.

Reyes, the 1999 World Pool champion, had a chance to get the upper hand in the seventh frame, but missed his right pocket shot on the No. 3 ball.

'Boy Samson' tag

Pouncing on the opportunity, the 1999 Idaho Open titlist Luat proceeded to clean up.

Luat, who once broke a cue ball on the break to earn the "Boy Samson" tag, also won the eighth rack for a 5-3 lead.

Reyes kept within sight at 7-5 after winning the 12th frame, but Luat calmly took the next two racks to seal the victory.

"I was just lucky against *Pareng* Efren, the breaks went my way," Luat said in Filipino. "It was anybody's game until his seventh rack shot on No. 3 went in and out."

Luat, last year's Japan Open runner-up, will face the loser of the match between former World No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante and reigning world champion Fil-Canadian Alex Pagulayan that was being played at presstime last night.

"As I've said before, I fear the local players more," Reyes said in Filipino. "They are the ones who often beat me."

Twin losses

Reyes recalled his twin losses in the 2002 and 2003 WPC to buddy Bustamante and to snooker ace Marlon Manalo in the 2004 World Pool Championship.

Meanwhile, Bangkok Asian Games gold medalist Gandy Valle of Davao City remained in the title hunt with a 9-7 victory over 20-year-old qualifier Jeffrey "Jeff Bata" de Luna of Tayabas, Quezon.

The 28-year-old Valle broke off from a 5-5 count forged by De Luna by stringing three racks. De Luna managed to close in at 8-7, but allowed Valle to wrap up the game after he scratched on the break. Valle will next face the loser of the match between Lee Vann Corteza and 2004 Fil-9 Open kingpin Gabica of Lapu-Lapu City.

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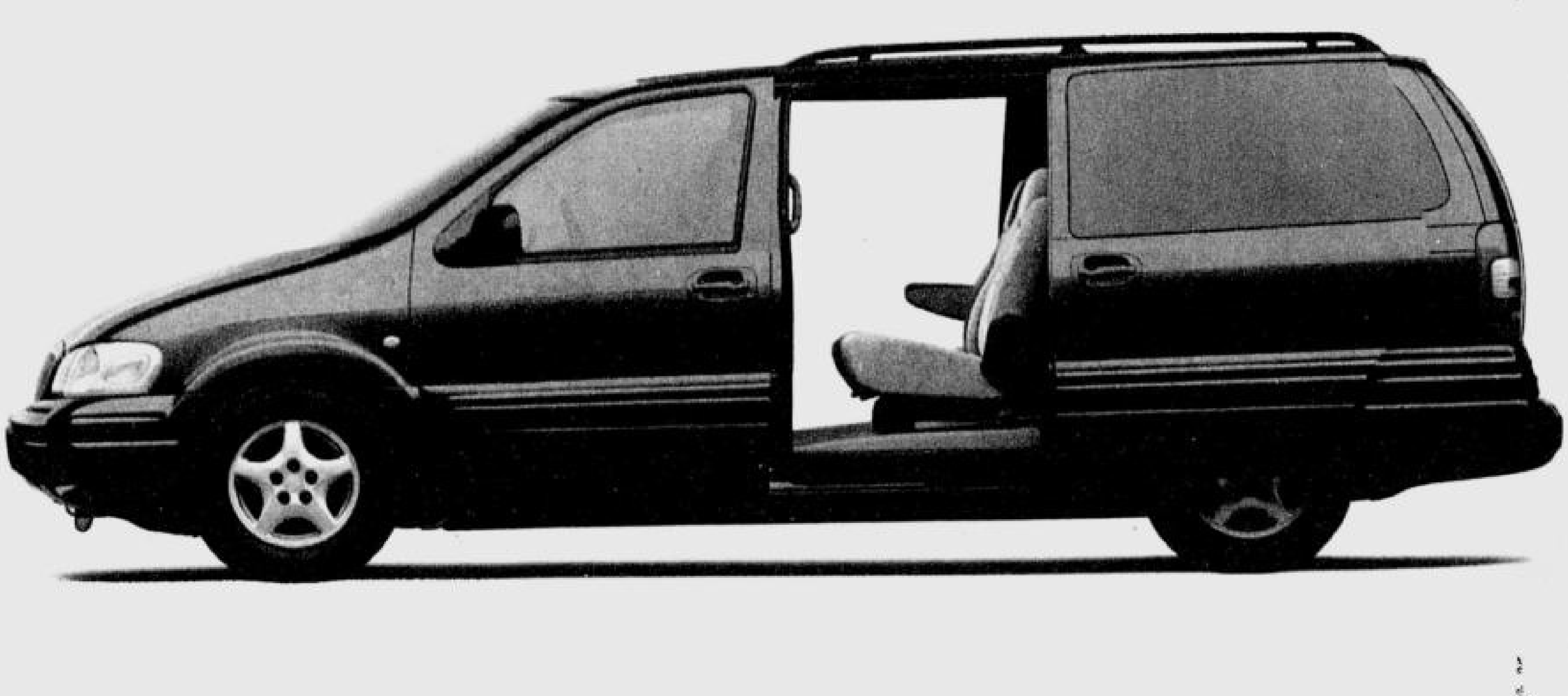

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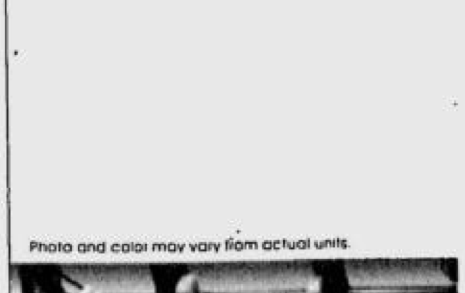

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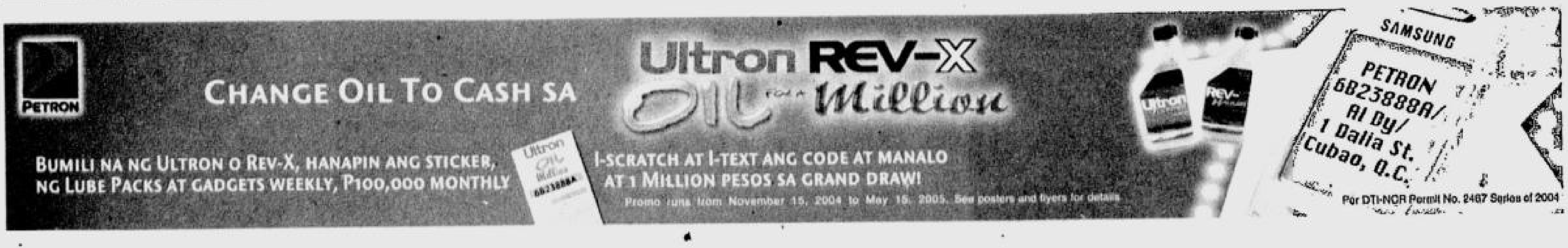
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MENK

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Menk and Co. may sit it out unless...

By June Navarro

BARANGAY Ginebra ace Eric Menk and 20 other foreign-born Filipino players only have less than a week left to comply with a new set of documentary requirements to be able to play in the Philippine Basketball Association's Reinforced Conference.

Failure to submit the additional citizenship papers required under a recent guideline approved by the PBA board would mean their indefinite suspensions starting with the import-flavored tournament which kicks off on March 3.

Aside from Menk, many of the current stars in the league are affected by the new ruling such as Jimmy Alapag of Talk 'N Text, Mike Cortez of Alaska, Nic Belasco and Danny Seigle of San Miguel Beer and John Arigo and Ali Peek of Coca-Cola.

The foreign-born cagers are required, among others, to furnish the PBA authenticated copies of their birth certificates and the marriage contract and birth certificates of their parents, aside from their recognition and confirmation documents from the Bureau of Immigration and the Department of Justice.

They should also submit the naturalization papers of their parents and notarized affidavits of at least three individuals attesting to their claim to Filipino citizenship.

"Unless the (PBA) board extends the March 1 deadline, we will push through with what has been deliberated on," said commissioner Noli Eala.

As of yesterday, no one among the 21 has completed the new set of eligibility requirements unanimously approved by the board during its regular meeting on Dec. 7 last year.

The rest of the affected players are Coca-Cola's Rafi Reavis and Rob Wainwright, Noy Castillo and Mike Hrabak of Purefoods, Shell's Chris Jackson and Kalani Ferreria, Harvey Carey of Talk 'N Text, Alaska's Brandon Cablay, Sonny Thoss, Rob Duat and Rob Johnson, Dorian Peña of San Miguel Beer and Barangay Ginebra's James Walkvist and Andy Seigle.

In the absence of their parents' marriage contract, the players should either secure a legal recognition from one of their parents or a proof of filiation, including DNA test results.

The same set of documentary requirements will also be applied to foreign-born rookie applicants seeking to join the Aug. 7 2005 PBA draft as well as players who were earlier suspended by the league based on a DOJ ruling that they faked their citizenship.

It is the same set of rules that has kept Asi Taulava in the freezer despite a Quezon City court decision ordering the league to lift its suspension on the Talk 'N Text center.

Meanwhile, the Phone Pals have taken in 6-foot-9 Earl Ike as its import, leaving Barangay Ginebra as the only team without an import. The 26-year-old Ike saw action for Fayetteville in the National Basketball Development League.

Pacquiao: I'll fire away like a gun

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

THERE'S a new phenomenon in the Los Angeles area these days, and it has nothing to do with a new hip-hop single.

It's everything about the preparation of Filipino icon Manny Pacquiao, who is getting in shape at the Wild Card Gym for his March 19 confrontation with Mexican star Erik "El Terrible" Morales.

"When you catch a glimpse of the speed Pacquiao possesses, you will wonder how Morales will ever be able to handle it," said a member of the Boxingtalk pool of writers following a visit to the Filipino's training venue on Vine Street.

In fact, with media gushing over the kind of physical fitness Pacquiao is in now, many feel the fight is now shaping up as a big mismatch.

This is also largely because Morales continues to train in high-altitude seclusion at the Otomi Mountains in Mexico City.

The Filipino ring hero is quick to point out, however, that he's training for what he feels is the toughest fight of his life.

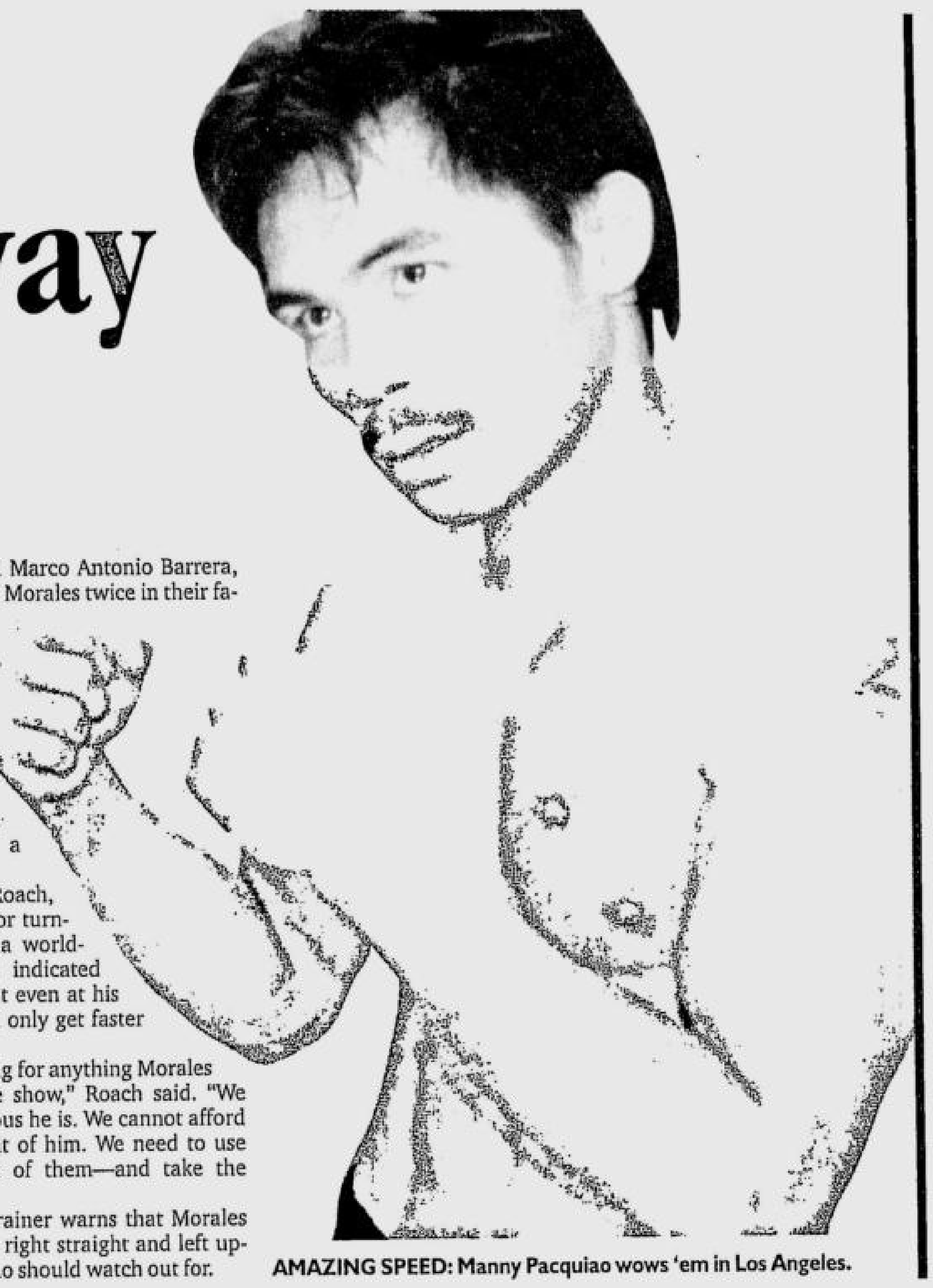
Pacquiao also remains focused despite the general feeling that he should be favored because he outclassed Marco Antonio Barrera, who in turn shamed Morales twice in their famous trilogy.

"I don't want to let down my fans," Pacquiao told Boxingtalk in its members-only article. "I expect an explosive battle. I will be coming out like a gun."

Trainer Freddie Roach, the man credited for turning Pacquiao into a world-class banger, also indicated that Pacquiao is not even at his top shape, and will only get faster as March 19 nears.

"We are preparing for anything Morales will bring into the show," Roach said. "We know how dangerous he is. We cannot afford to just stay in front of him. We need to use movements—a lot of them—and take the fight to him."

The American trainer warns that Morales packs a dangerous right straight and left uppercut that Pacquiao should watch out for.



AMAZING SPEED: Manny Pacquiao wows 'em in Los Angeles.

PSC restores subsidy for national pool

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MORE GOOD news for the national athletes.

The Philippine Sports Commission yesterday restored the monthly stipend for members of the national training pool, which was earlier scrapped due to financial constraints.

PSC officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez said the P4,000 monthly allowance is now available for the national pool members, who are mostly young athletes who have yet to make the Philippine team:

On top of the stipend, the national pool members can also avail themselves of the daily meal allowance which has been raised from P250 to P350.

Class A athletes, or those who have won gold medals in the previous Southeast Asian Games or Asian Games, get P8,000 monthly, while Class B athletes, or those who have won silver or bronze, receive P6,000.

The stoppage of the monthly allowance for national pool members was one of the main complaints of the Alliance of Coaches and Athletes of the Philippines against the agency last year.

Ramirez earlier ordered a fresh set of uniforms for all the athletes. The P6.5 million to be spent on the uniforms is on top of P2.5 million worth of beddings the PSC ordered for the athletes' quarters around the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Delo off-road series reels off in GenSan

THE COUNTRY'S best off-roaders satisfy their appetite for adventure when the first leg of Delo Sports National Extreme 4x4 Series 2005 roars off today at the Robinson's Lot J. Catolico along the national highway in Barangay Lagao, General Santos City.

Sanctioned by the National Association of Filipino Off-Roaders (Nasfor) and hosted by three different clubs, namely, GenSan 4x4 Fun Club, 4 Wheelers Dadiangas and 4x4 GenSan, the premier off-road competition in the land promises to be another rollicking adventure featuring enthusiasts aboard their monster trucks and sports utility vehicles.

"Off-roading in the Philippines has gone a long way, thanks to the support of Caltex Delo Sports, which has been a fixture in the rise of this exciting motorsport," said Teody Dumangan, GenSan 4x4 Fun Club president.

Tamaraws seal title tiff with Warriors

By Marc Anthony Reyes

A U-BELT brawl.

Far Eastern University and University of the East, a stone's throw from each other in Manila's busy University Belt, downed their respective rivals yesterday to set up a championship showdown in the 3rd Collegiate Champions League at the Makati Coliseum.

The defending champion FEU Tamaraws gamely matched University of Visayas' fast-paced style of play before running away with a 85-71 victory, while the UE Warriors decisioned the out-of-sync Philippine Christian University Dolphins, 72-67, to arrange a winner-take-all match Sunday.

Though their campuses are separated only by the narrow R. Papa Street, it won't be a friendly battle for UE and FEU when they dispute P500,000 worth of academic scholarship.

The Warriors won the first edition of the tournament, while the Tamaraws snagged it last year, making this year's title all the more important for the contending schools.

The Tamaraws, beefed up with the core of the UAAP team that placed second to La Salle last year, posted a 42-34 halftime lead before pulling away for good from the run-and-gun Cebuano squad via a 9-0 run at the start of the third quarter.

The Lancers, who have won 49 straight games in the Cebu Basketball League, never recovered as Granny Goose slotman JR Quiñahan failed to get support from his teammates.

Meanwhile, Mark Borboran barreled his way in for a layup and made two crucial free throws in the last two minutes as the Warriors notched their fourth straight victory.

The 6-foot-4 Borboran overshadowed his more popular counterpart Gabby Espinas, who fouled out in the last 48 seconds after committing a flagrant foul.

Espinas, the NCAA most valuable player and rookie of the year as well as the Philippine Sportswriters Association's awardee for amateur caging, gave to his frustration after being denied possession most of the game. He finished with 16 points and grabbed 26 rebounds.

"We didn't want (Espinas) him to get the ball inside so

TAMARAWS/ A27

The joy of betting

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

BACOLOD—Luzon made the perfect attendance but not Visayas and Mindanao.

That's how it is as the PAL Seniors Interclub teed off today at both the Negros Occidental Golf & Country Club and Bacolod Golf & Country Club in nearby Binitin, Murcia.

Ang Tay, Leyte and Lumbia of Tacloban were no-shows from the Visayas as did South Cotabato and Zamboanga from Mindanao.

The international cast had but one no-show, the Pinoy Golfers from Singapore.

So, unless the registry got fattened after I had e-mailed this piece, the official entry list would be 68, with the international cast registering the most number with 25. Luzon had 19 and Visayas and Mindanao 12 each.

"It's still a big number," said Domeng Duerme, the tournament chair, who presided over the captains meeting yesterday at the NOGCC clubhouse. "Everybody is raring to go to action."

There was a lively discussion during yesterday's captains meeting about the rules of the tournament and the mechanics governing each round. So fun-filled was the meeting that soon, discussions became second fiddle to jokes.

One team captain asked Domeng Duerme: "Will PAL reimburse our losses for the day?"

There were guffaws, of course. But in his usual polite mien, Domeng took it in stride.

Said Domeng: "Well, my friend, the PAL Interclub does not maintain a bank account."

Laughter once more.

It is no secret that golfers have the habit of engaging in betting, both friendly and not-so-friendly. Most golfers can't play the game without a bet. As one friend of mine loves to say before we start a round in the morning: "We didn't wake up so early just to play without a bet."

To most duffers, betting is the spice of golf.

It does not mean that even the really good golfers avoid betting. No, they also wager bets.

Many golfers play better when there's a pot to be won. Others lose the urge to play well if there's no bet.

To many golfers, bets develop confidence.

Was it Lee Trevino who said, "Confidence is when you bet 20 dollars and you only have five dollars in your pocket."

Others fall prey to trembling knees when they need to sink a three-footer to run away with the whole pot in a "palusutan."

The seniors are at play and will not be done until Sunday, Feb. 27.

Many are in their 60s, 70s. But don't be fooled by their ages. You will be surprised to find that many of them still love to place bets. To most of them, betting is an elixir, a built-in tonic to keep the adrenaline flowing.

I know a guy who is a single-digit handicapper. Each time he is pitted against this buddy of mine with a double-digit handicap, he crumbles. His game suddenly deserts him and he plays like a beginner all over again. Intimidation is the name of the game because the game, simply, is mental.

I like betting as part of golf. It could be 10 pesos or a thousand bucks, doesn't matter. It could be just beer or lunch, doesn't matter.

In the end, it is not the amount you won but the honor of scoring a victory. The thrill of a win has that magical tingle that gives you a high long after you've left the golf course.

Betting, anyone?

***

FASTBREAK. Congratulations to Gov. Vic Valera of Abra and Mayor Ching Valera of Bangued for their tireless efforts in ensuring the success once more of the "Arya Abra!" festival to commemorate the province's foundation day and fiesta of Bangued. While I feel honored to be invited once more to the land of birth of my departed father (Tonyong of Pidigan), I couldn't make it again as the PAL Interclub Golf Championship has gotten in the way. I'll make it up to you soon, Sir Vic and Madame Ching.

InqBox
Question of the Week
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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NEGROS GOLF BASH PAL president Jaime J. Bautista hits the ceremonial drive kicking off the 19th PAL Seniors Interclub yesterday at the Negros Occidental Golf Club in Bacolod City. Bautista, a serious golfer, is the first PAL president in recent Interclub history to open the event.

PAL INTERCLUB

Luisita starts quest for 6th senior plum

By Musong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—Luisita's campaign to extend a Philippine Airlines Interclub golf championship record officially starts today as seniors action tees off in two old layouts in this bustling city and in the nearby town of Murcia.

Though first-day action will feature play from the lower divisions, focus will be on the Luisitans and those who will try to deny them their date with destiny.

The Luisitans, with their rock-solid core calling the Marapara and Binitin courses home, shoot for a record sixth straight seniors title with the fiercest challenge expected to come from Canlubang, which is led by one of the tournament's most prominent stars.

Richie Garcia has boldly predicted a Luisita romp as dozens of teams composed of hundreds of players officially start the ball rolling in this event regarded as the unofficial national team championship.

"We will win again," said Garcia, who was born here and learned to play the game in both courses that use the winds and its tree-lined roughs as their primary defenses.

"We remain hungry despite the previous wins."

Tommy Manotoc, the defending individual champion, sees action for the first time as a senior for the Sugar Barons, making Canlubang the most logical threat to Luisita's aspirations.

"That (Luisita) team will be very hard to beat," said Manotoc. "But this is golf and anything can still happen. We're not going to just sit around here and give it to them (Luisitans)."

The 55-year-old Manotoc, also the reigning Asia-Pacific senior champ, played for Wack Wack last year when the event was played in Cagayan de Oro and Bukidnon. He helped Wack Wack finish a distant second to the Luisitans.

Former professional Rolly Viray debuts in senior play for Canlubang and stands as the team's No. 2 man.

But whether or not Canlubang can come up with a balanced output for two days remains the big question.

One which can't be asked of Luisita.

Joining Garcia are Francis Gaston, Iggy Clavecilla, Alex Montelibano and Gov. Carlo Joson, who are expected to contribute heavily to the team cause.

Senior play will have eight players seeing action for 36 holes with the top five scores counting towards the team score each day.

Luisita has established a dynasty in this tournament, and the long-running labor problems at the Hacienda Luisita did not stop the team from coming over to defend its title.

Former Tarlac representative and Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco is the team captain, taking over from longtime skipper Rudy Samson, who died recently.

Ben Abalos, the former Mandaluyong mayor, will spearhead Wack Wack together with Pablo Soon, Alex Sison, Fernando Jacinto, Andy Co, Bryan Cockrell, Stewart Co and Boy Figueroa.

Tams seal title go with Warriors

From page A26

we put pressure on him to stay outside which is not his strongest point," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren.

The Warriors came up with just 35 rebounds as against the 65 of the Dolphins, who even led by as many as eight points, 39-31, late in the first half.

But there was simply no stopping the Warriors, who entered the game riding the momentum of a three-game winning streak that started in the second round.

The scores:

First Game

UE 72—Borboran 17, Arellano 14, Custodio 10, Saguindal 8, Palaganas 8, Labagala 8, Napo 3, Canizares 2, Lopez 2, Raymundo 0, Alastoy.

PCU 67—Espinas 16, Castro 13, Sanz 13, Solis 12, David 5, Retaga 4, Garrido 3, Belga 1, Santos 0, Cecila 0, Amparado 0, Salangsang.

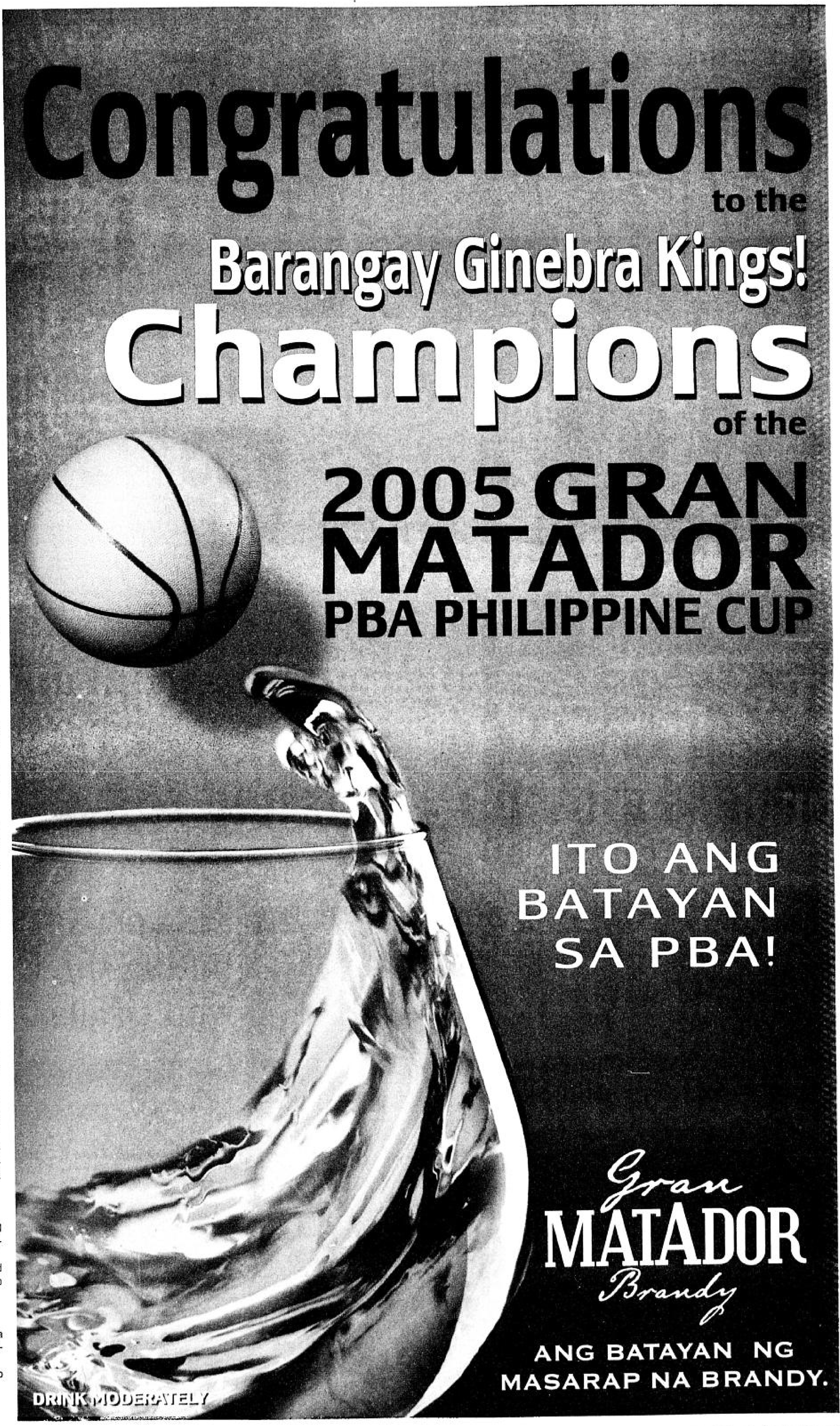
Quarters: 19-26, 36-39, 53-52, 72-67

Second Game

FEU 85—Mangahas 15, Ja.Villanueva 15, Santos 9, Rizada 9, Barcellano 8, Miranda 7, Isip 5, Flores, 5, Fernandez 5, Adolfo 3, Dela Cruz 2, Jo. Villanueva 0, Niepes 0.

UV 71—Quinahan 17, Rodriguez 16, Ababon 13, Binonggo 8, Acad 6, Sevilla 4, Nepana 4, Calo 3, Abelona 0, Balague 0.

Quarters: 15-21, 42-34, 63-46, 85-71



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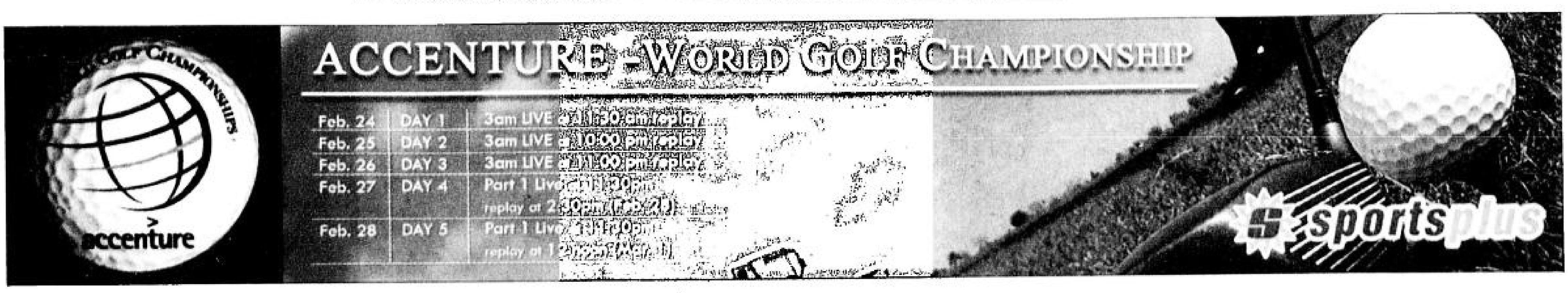

ACCENTURE - WORLD GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

Feb. 24	DAY 1	3am LIVE [illegible] 11:30 am replay
Feb. 25	DAY 2	3am LIVE [illegible] 10:00 pm replay
Feb. 26	DAY 3	3am LIVE [illegible] 11:00 pm replay
Feb. 27	DAY 4	Part 1 Live [illegible] 11:30pm replay at 2:30pm (Feb 28)
Feb. 28	DAY 5	Part 1 Live [illegible] replay at 12 [illegible] (Mar. 1)

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O'N

76ers get Webber in six-player deal

PHILADELPHIA—The Philadelphia 76ers have acquired star forward Chris Webber from the Sacramento Kings in a six-player deal on the eve of the trading deadline, the 76ers announced on Wednesday.

The Sixers also received swingman Matt Barnes and forward Michael Bradley.

They sent forwards Kenny Thomas, Corliss Williamson and Brian Skinner to the Kings, who clearly are looking to reduce payroll.

A five-time All-Star, Webber is undoubtedly the best player to line up with Allen Iverson, who is working on his fourth scoring title but has been the lone offensive option for much of his nine-year career.

"He was excited," Sixers president Billy King said of Iverson. "He said, 'I gotta call my wife and call my mom and say, '"We got C-Webb."' There's some excitement." The 6-foot-10 Webber turns 33 on Tuesday and is averaging 21.3 points, 9.7 rebounds and 5.5 assists in 46 games this season, his 12th in the NBA.

He has among the best hands of any big man in NBA history, but there are questions about his age, his surgically repaired knee and his salary.

Webber will make $17.5 million this season and has three years and over $62 million remaining on his deal.

He and Iverson will consume nearly $40 million of the team's salary cap in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons.

No player has averaged more than 20 points playing alongside Iverson since Jerry Stackhouse in 1996-97—Iverson's rookie season.

At 29.8 points, Iverson is scoring nearly 18 points per game more than Marc Jackson, Philadelphia's second-leading scorer.

The deal also gives the Sixers a second star that may help push them past Boston in the weak Atlantic Division.

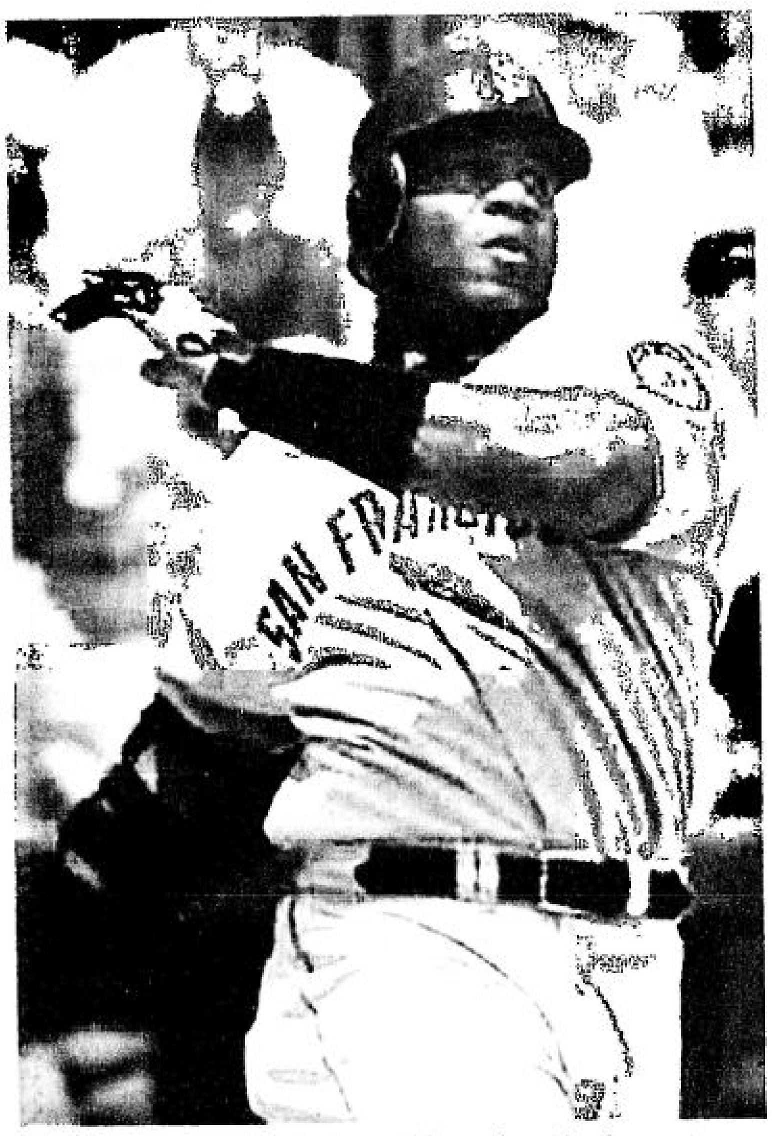
The 6-foot-7 Barnes and 6-foot-10 Bradley are young role players who will help the team's depth. But the key is Webber, who joins his fourth team.

The top overall pick in the 1993 draft, Webber has averaged 22.0 points, 10.1 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 1.61 blocks in 665 games with Golden State, Washington and Sacramento.

Although they have the sixth-best record in the NBA, the Kings did not want to continue their long-term commitment to Webber and received three mid-range frontcourt players—and some financial flexibility—in return. *AFP*

REUTERS

JOEL Przybilla (center) of the Trail Blazers locks arms with Lakers Brian Grant (left) and Jumaine Jones on a rebound play.



BONDS: Canseco broke the baseball fraternity code of respect.

Bonds offers no apologies

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Barry Bonds offered no apologies as he reported for his first day of the San Francisco Giants' training camp, saying he doesn't understand the fans and press' interest in steroids.

"What did I do?" Bonds asked. "I am just sorry we're going through all this stuff, all this fictional stuff ... some of it may be fact, who knows?

"But to write it over and over again, what's your reason? What are you going to say about it when you're wrong." It wasn't what the surly Bonds said as he arrived to begin training for a new American baseball season but rather what he didn't say.

CANSECO

He dodged the steroid issue and leveled his guns at former Major League Baseball all-star Jose Canseco who accused Bonds of using performance-enhancing drugs in a new book which describes a rampant culture of steroid use in the sport.

The 40-year-old Bonds said Canseco broke the baseball fraternity code of respect.

"(There) is a code in baseball, that you should respect your peers," Bonds said. "I don't know Canseco besides hello and goodbye. I don't put any weight into what he says.

"I was better than Jose then and I've been better than him in my whole career. For somebody who brags about what he did, I don't see enough (Canseco's) records." Asked point blank whether he used performance-enhancing drugs, Bonds said, "I am not a child. You repeat those (questions) to children and eventually they tell you. I don't." The seven-time National League MVP, Bonds refused to discuss the Bay Area Laboratory Co-operative (Balco) case which is at the heart of a US sports steroid scandal. *AFP*

Big Unit mixes fun and business

TAMPA, Florida—Randy Johnson threw batting practice to the New York Yankees for the first time on Wednesday, and the batters sounded impressed by the 2.09-meter (6-foot-10) left-hander.

"Sometimes it looks like he's shaking your hand," said Ruben Sierra, whose bat broke against one of the Big Unit's pitches.

Johnson threw 53 pitches during a 10-minute session, showing a mixture of fastballs and sliders to Sierra, Rey Sanchez and minor leaguer Omir Santos—all right-handed hitters. He broke Sierra's bat on his 38th pitch.

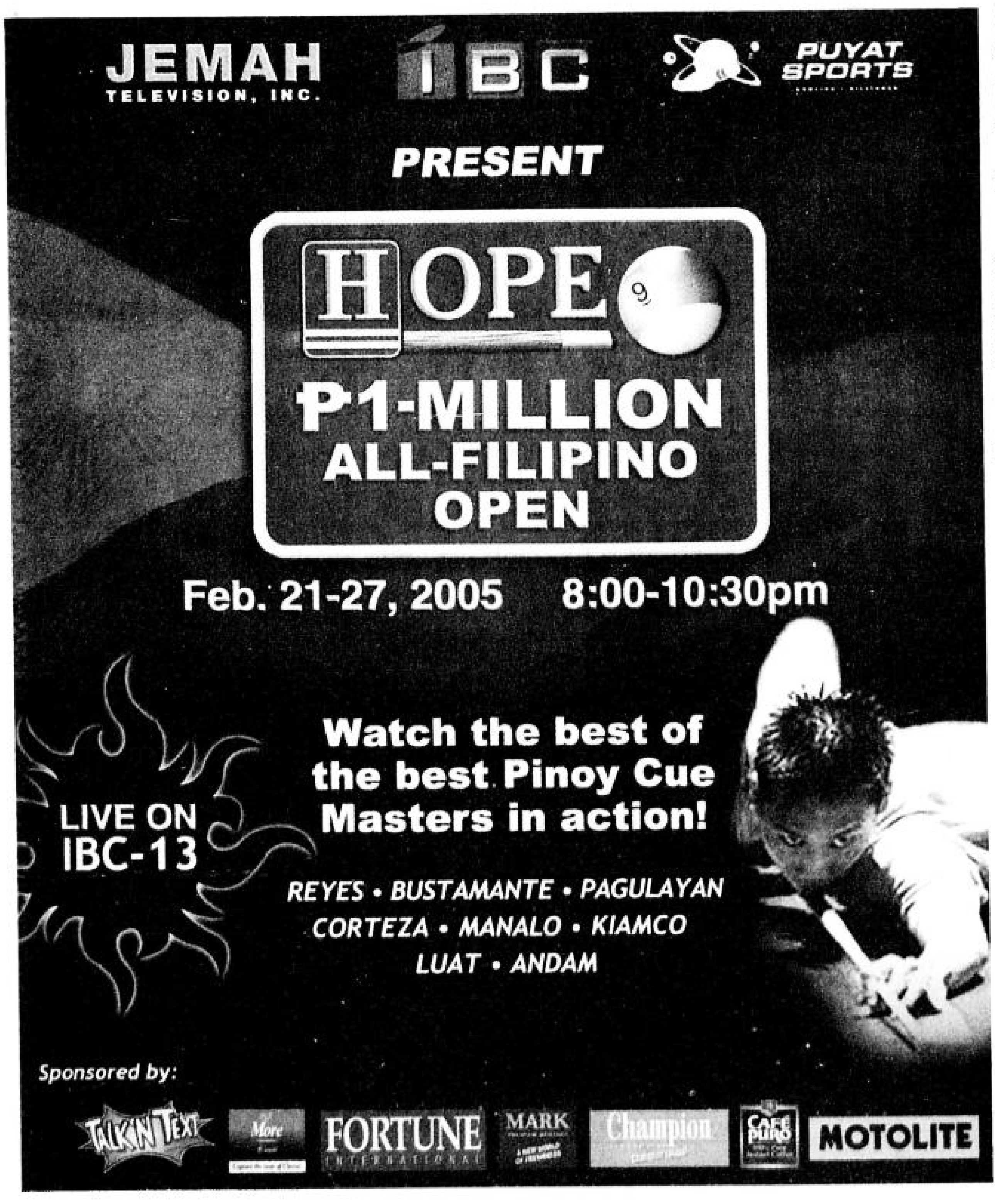
"I'm not trying to break bats, throw the ball by them," Johnson said. "I'm just trying to work. I got my work in today. It's a step in the right direction."

Known for a no-nonsense, even angry, demeanor while pitching, Johnson smiled when catcher Jorge Posada had some trouble throwing the ball back to the mound over the protective screen while he was warming up. When Posada made a perfect return throw after the next warmup toss, Johnson leaped into the air with a big smile, which drew a laugh from some of the fans at Legends Field.

"Just having a little fun," Johnson said. "All in good fun."

"He threw a lot of strikes and worked fast," Yankees pitching coach Mel Stottlemyre said. "His delivery was good and (he) threw some real good breaking balls, which I was surprised this early. He's taking it a little easy. Later on, I'm sure he's going to explode a little bit."

Johnson threw in a bullpen behind the right field stands before walking along the foul line en route to his batting practice session. The cheer from the fans grew as he walked toward the first-base dugout. AP



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Sosa begins hitting show with Orioles

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida—As a way of introducing himself to his new teammates, Sammy Sosa slammed about two dozen baseballs far over the center-field wall during his first workout with the Baltimore Orioles.

Before he was done, nearly half the squad interrupted their drills to watch the show.

"Sammy, we're going to run out of balls!" joked outfielder Larry Bigbie, who watched in awe as one shot after another soared onto an airfield behind the practice field.

"They'll be parking the planes in the hangars from now on," Bigbie said later.

The Chicago Cubs were relieved to get rid of Sosa after the Dominican's troubled 2004 season, and the Orioles are delighted to have him.

"I'm in a new house with a young team that I can help," he said. "I'm very happy to be here, no question. And I can see in their faces that they're really happy for me to be here."

Sosa came to the Orioles this month in a trade for three players to Chicago. Sosa once was a hero in Chicago, but his 13-year stay soured after a series of incidents in which he was caught using a corked bat, had a rift with Cubs manager Dusty Baker, and left early during the 2004 season finale.

"That page is closed, and I don't want to touch that page no more," he said. "We're here to move on and go forward."

During his stay in Chicago, Sosa battled with Mark McGwire in a memorable home run duel in 1998, went to the All-Star game seven times, and was the 1998 NL MVP. But he contends that the corked bat and his early departure from the ballpark ruined an otherwise wonderful relationship.

"For the 13 years I was in Chicago, I only made two mistakes. That's pretty good," he said. "If I had known that leaving early last year would have caused such a controversy, I would have never done it." *AP*

MARADONA

Maradona has to pay $40M tax

ROME—As if Diego Maradona did not have enough to worry about, he now has a 30 million euro ($40 million) Italian tax bill to tackle.

The Argentine, who has been battling drug addiction, lost his fight in Italian courts this week against back-taxes from his days of playing for Napoli more than a decade ago.

"The case was lost, it's true," said Vincenzo Siniscalchi, one of Maradona's lawyers.

After arguing unsuccessfully that his old club should foot the bill, Maradona's lawyers tried to clear his name partly by arguing a procedural technicality: tax collectors did not notify Maradona of the back taxes until it was too late.

The legal strategy failed at Italy's high court.

"They said he was notified on two occasions," Siniscalchi told Reuters, adding that the sentence was definitive.

Maradona was an enormous celebrity when he lived in the southern port city of Naples, where adoring fans recently opened a museum to honor the man. *Reuters*

eal powers Pacers past Heat

Injured Shaq sits out game for Miami, due for scan

TORONTO—Jermaine O'Neal scored all three of his team's overtime baskets, including the winning jumper with 11 seconds to go, to lift the Indiana Pacers to a 93-91 victory over the Miami Heat Wednesday.

O'Neal had 29 points, 14 rebounds and five blocked shots in Indianapolis as the Pacers won their fourth straight game, and 11th in a row against the Heat.

Miami was without Shaquille O'Neal, who injured his left knee in the first quarter of Tuesday's clash with the Chicago Bulls.

The Heat say O'Neal will have a scan when he returns to Miami Thursday. He watched Wednesday's game from the bench.

Reggie Miller added 23 points to the Indiana attack and Stephen Jackson chipped in with 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Dwyane Wade piled up 38 points for the Heat but his desperation shot bounced off the rim at the buzzer. Miami rallied from an early 14-point deficit to force overtime.

Damon Jones added 17 points for the Heat while Udonis Haslem picked up 11 points and a career-high 18 rebounds.

In Cleveland, Zydrunas Ilgauskas posted 33 points, 26 in the second half, as the Cavaliers downed the Chicago Bulls, 100-91.

Ilgauskas also had eight rebounds and seven blocks. LeBron James registered 27 points, 11 assists, six rebounds and five steals for the Cavs.

Ben Gordon scored 21 points for the Bulls and Kirk Hinrich 13.

In Washington, Gilbert Arenas recorded 30 points and 10 rebounds to carry the Wizards past the Memphis Grizzlies, 93-83.

Antawm Jamison added 27 points for the Wizards, who won their fifth straight home game.

Mike Miller had 16 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for Memphis.

In Milwaukee, Desmond Mason scored 15 points as the Bucks pounded the New Jersey Nets, 100-81.

ZaZa Pachulia tied a career-high with 14 points and added 12 rebounds for the Bucks, winners of five of their last seven games.

Vince Carter had 26 points to lead the Nets, who have lost five out of seven.

In New Orleans, Rashard Lewis notched 26 points to power the Seattle SuperSonics to a 103-85 rout of the Hornets.

Ray Allen added 25 points for the Sonics (37-15) while JR Smith paced the Hornets (11-43) with 19.

In Denver, Andre Miller scored 22 points as the Nuggets overcame the Boston Celtics, 107-86.

Carmelo Anthony added 19 points and Kenyon Martin had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Nuggets.

Delonte West claimed 16 points for the Celtics.

In Phoenix, Leandro Barbosa and Joe Johnson grabbed 22 points apiece as the Suns defeated the Los Angeles Clippers, 118-101.

Bobby Simmons had 23 points for the Clippers, losers of eight straight games.

In San Antonio, 30 points from Tim Duncan carried the Spurs to victory over the Houston Rockets for the first time in three attempts, 99-81.

Tony Parker added 22 points for San Antonio, now 24-1 at home.

In Salt Lake City, Dirk Nowitzki poured in 29 points as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Utah Jazz 101-83.

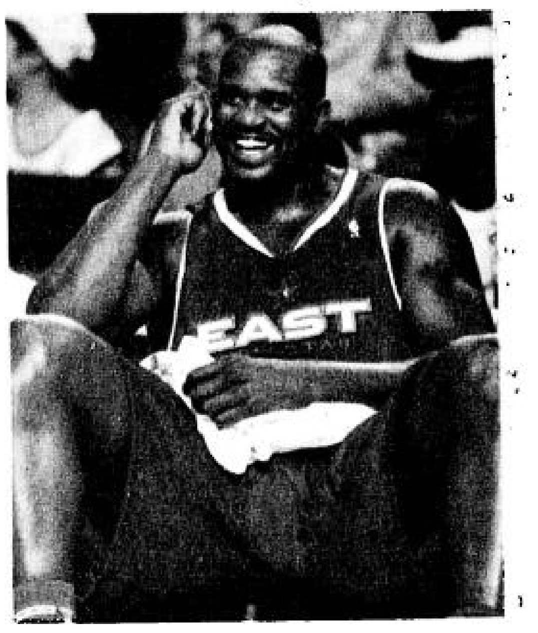
Josh Howard added 18 points and nine rebounds while Michael Finley picked up 24 points.

In Portland, Kobe Bryant's 31-point haul pushed the Los Angeles Lakers to an 86-83 win over the Trail Blazers.

Damon Stoudamire had 25 points for Portland.

In Oakland, James Richardson contributed 31 points as the Golden State Warriors edged the Atlanta Hawks 101-96.

Antoine Walker led the Hawks with 27 points.


O'NEAL

Bryant to be questioned under oath

DENVER—Lawyers for the woman accusing Kobe Bryant of rape will get their first chance to question him under oath when they meet the NBA star on Friday in Los Angeles.

Bryant will be questioned during a seven-hour session, the woman's attorneys, L. Lin Wood and John Clune, said Wednesday. Bryant spoke with sheriff's deputies the night after the June 2003 incident, but Friday's deposition will be the first time since the 20-year-old woman accused Bryant of attacking her that he will be under oath.

"Federal rules allow me to ask any question relevant to the claims or defenses in the case," Wood said.

The woman sued the Los Angeles Lakers guard in Denver federal court last summer, three weeks before the criminal case against him in Eagle County collapsed when she decided she could not take part in a trial. The federal lawsuit seeks unspecified damages for mental injuries, humiliation and public scorn the former hotel worker said she has suffered since the incident at a Vail-area resort.

Bryant, a married father of one, issued an apology but insisted the sex was consensual.

Judge Richard Matsch rejected a request by Bryant's lawyers to limit what the woman's attorneys will be able to ask during the deposition. The questioning was initially scheduled for December, but Bryant's attorneys refused to allow questions about his sexual history, claiming they could violate the privacy rights of people not involved in the lawsuit.

Matsch said he would deal with any objections by Bryant's lawyers after the deposition.

Wood said there will be a second round of questioning later to ask Bryant about his "financial condition." *AP*

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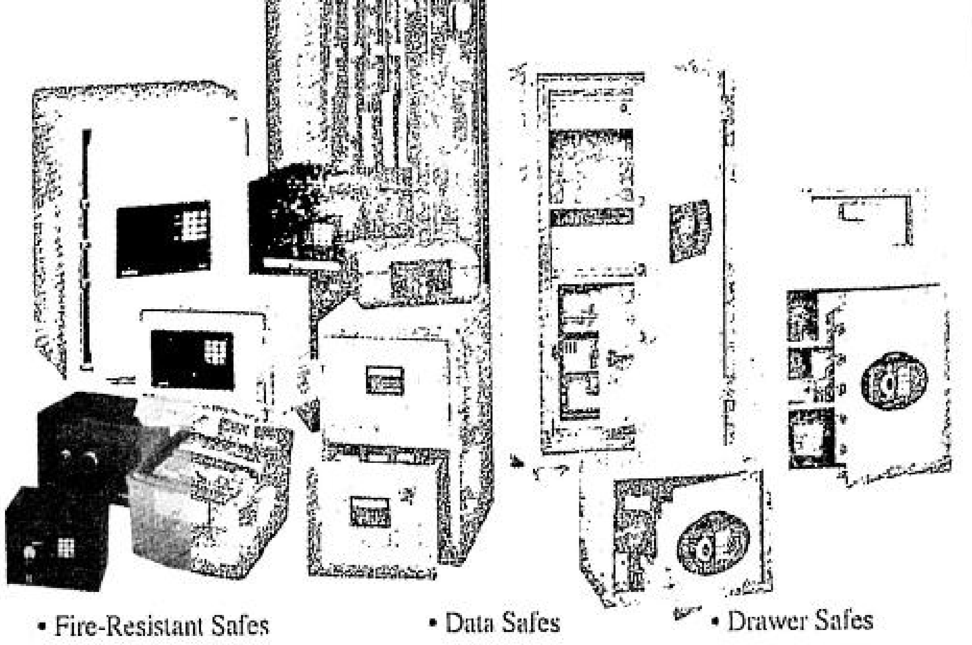

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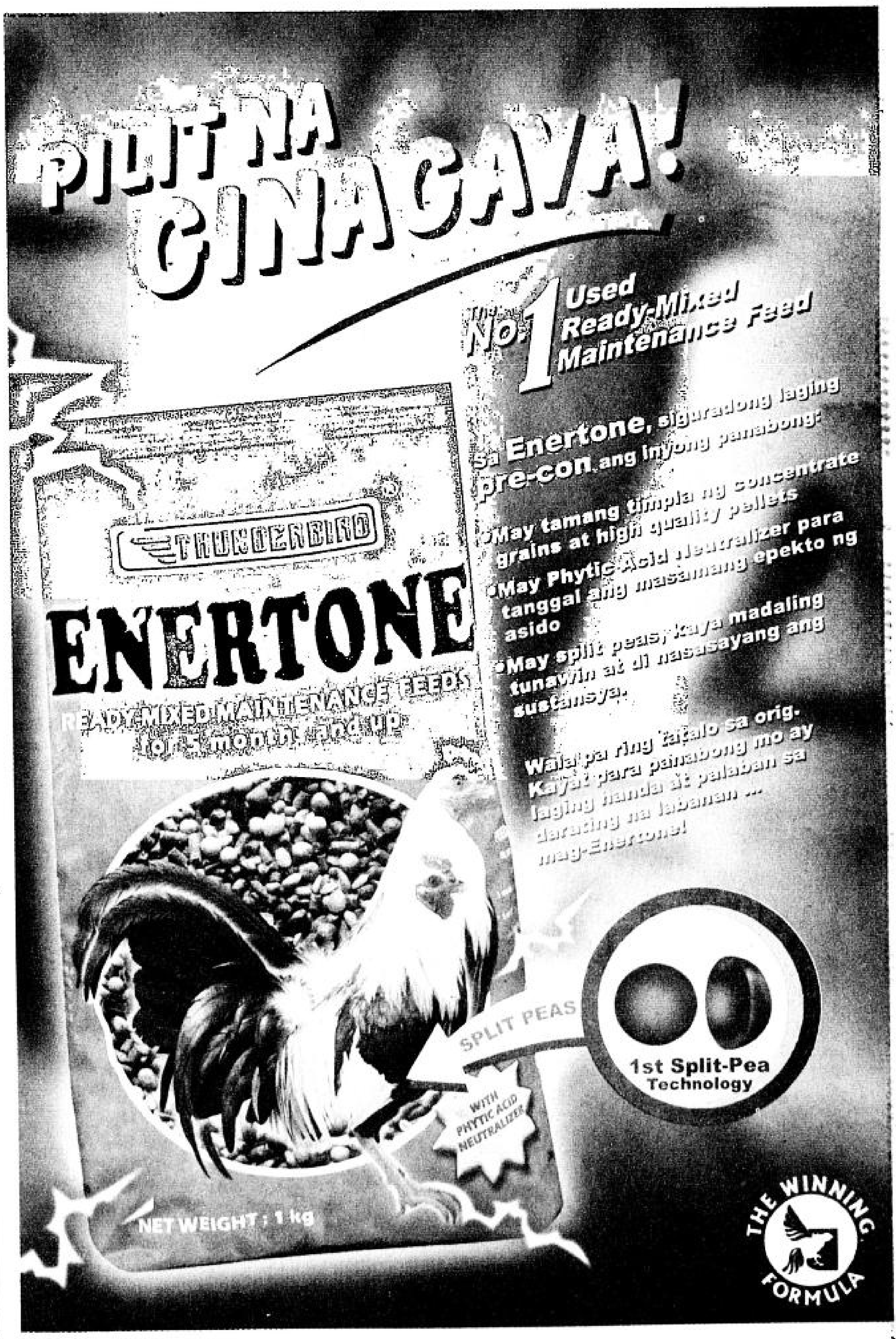
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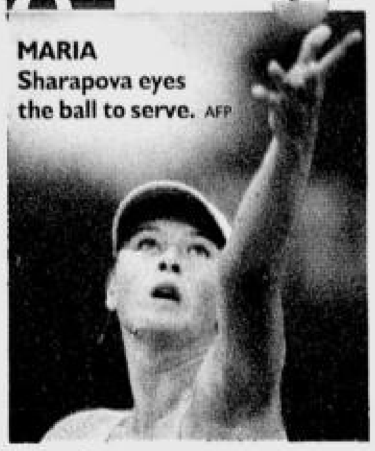

MARIA Sharapova eyes the ball to serve. AFP

Sharapova opens Qatar bid with easy win

DOHA, QATAR—Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova opened her Qatar Open campaign with an easy 6-1, 6-1 victory over Gisela Dulko of Argentina in the second round on Wednesday.

Russian Sharapova, who missed the Paris Open earlier this month due to a respiratory illness, showed no signs of her layoff as she broke Dulko in the second and fourth games to jump to a 4-0 lead.

The Argentine had a chance to break Sharapova in the fifth game of the first set but Dulko failed to seize her opportunity and the second seed was in no mood to oblige her with more openings.

Australian fourth seed Alicia Molik downed compatriot Nicole Pratt, 6-3, 6-2.

Molik, a quarterfinalist at last month's Australian Open, has been steadily climbing up the rankings and is now at number nine.

"I have been playing well regularly and I am happy that I could carry that form into Doha as well," Molik said.

"During the last couple of years there was lot of change in my game. There is some consistency now and I am excited about it," added the 24-year-old.

Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia knocked out Russian sixth seed Elena Bovina, 6-0, 3-6, 6-3.

Top seed Amelie Mauresmo of France and Russian third seed Anastasia Myskina, who is bidding for a third successive Qatar title, play their second round matches later on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Puerta knocks out Moya anew in Mexicano meet

LONDON—Argentina's Mariano Puerta knocked out top seed Carlos Moya for the second successive tournament, beating the Spaniard, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, in the second round of the $643,000 Abierto Mexicano tournament in Acapulco on Wednesday.

Moya was also the top seed when he slumped to a 7-6, 6-3 defeat by the unseeded Puerta in the quarterfinals of the Buenos Aires Open two weeks ago.

The Spaniard won the first of his 18 ATP singles titles in Buenos Aires 10 years ago. Puerta has not lifted a trophy since Bogota in 2000.

Third seed Guillermo Canas safely reached the third round when the Argentine beat France's Nicolas Devilder, 6-0, 7-5.

Czech Jiri Novak, the fifth seed, defeated Spain's Oscar Hernandez, 6-3, 6-1, while sixth seed Filippo Volandri of Italy edged past Spaniard Alberto Martin, 7-6, 7-5.

Eighth seed Rafael Nadal overcame fellow Spaniard Santiago Ventura, 7-6, 6-2, but seventh-seeded compatriot David Ferrer was beaten, 7-5, 6-2, by Felix Mantilla in another all-Spanish affair. *Reuters*

MARIANO Puerta reacts after winning over Carlos Moya during the Mexico Open Wednesday. AP

Federer survives qualifier

DUBAI—World No. 1 Roger Federer struggled past Czech qualifier Ivo Minar, 6-7, 6-3, 7-6, when he began the defense of his Dubai Open title on Wednesday.

The Swiss took almost two hours to scrape past a first-round opponent who has won just five matches in his career.

There were comfortable wins in the second round, however, for fourth seed Andre Agassi and fifth-seeded Spaniard Tommy Robredo.

American Agassi took just under an hour to beat Feliciano Lopez of Spain, 6-1, 6-3, while Robredo drubbed Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic, 6-2, 6-4.

In a late game, Germany's Nicolas Kiefer came back from a poor start against South Korea's Lee Hyung-taik to win, 2-6, 6-1, 6-3.

Czech Minar, in his match against the game's leading player, held a point for a 4-1 lead in the final set.

Serving and returning well and hustling confidently at the net, Minar did not give Federer a chance to settle.

"It does you good to win matches like this," said Federer, who next faces former world No. 1 Juan Carlos Ferrero.

Minar, 20, had demonstrated his potential by reaching the Sydney final last month before losing to Lleyton Hewitt.

Games in the first set went with serve, with only one going to deuce, on Minar's serve. The Czech clinched the tiebreak, 7-5, with a forehand drive volley.

It took Federer 53 minutes to earn his first break point and the top seed, who won the Rotterdam title on Sunday, broke to lead the second set 3-2.

Another break at 5-3 gave Federer that set but he failed to carry his momentum, dropping his serve to love with a double-fault in the opening game of the final set.

Federer failed to convert two break points in the next game before being forced to save a break point at 3-1.

Minar played a weak service game that allowed Federer to level at 3-3 and a fine crosscourt backhand return gave the Swiss a second break to lead 5-3.

Even then, Minar refused to give up the battle, breaking as Federer served for victory. Minar went down fighting 7-5 in the tiebreak.

Federer conceded losing had crossed his mind. "When I was broken at the beginning of the third, I thought this could really be a tough one." *Reuters*

Singh, Woods ready for Match Play

CARLSBAD, California—Vijay Singh and Tiger Woods are ready to go at the rain-delayed WGC-Accenture Match Play Championship, although there are doubts about the ability of the waterlogged La Costa Resort and Spa to host the $7.5-million event.

"I walked on it today but it looks like it's in worse condition than yesterday, and yesterday was bad," said Australia's Stuart Appleby on Wednesday.

Appleby, winner of the season-opening Mercedes Championship, added: "The course was extremely wet. Many holes out there were unplayable.

"There's probably a 25-percent chance we'll have a playable golf course tomorrow (Thursday)."

Battered by days of record rainfall, officials pushed back Wednesday's original start to Thursday and could be facing more delays if the weather refuses to cooperate.

The second and third rounds are due to be staged on Friday, with the quarterfinals and semifinals on Saturday, and the 36-hole final planned for Sunday.

Rain or shine, Woods said he was ready to begin his quest for an unprecedented third consecutive title here and a return to the top of the world rankings.

The 29-year-old American has won his last 12 matches in this event, with his overall record comprising 20 victories and only three defeats.

World No. 2 Woods has made a habit of thriving in the World Golf Championships (WGC) arena, with eight wins in 16 starts. In contrast, world No. 1 Singh has yet to win one.

Woods said he was looking forward to facing Zimbabwe's Nick Price in his opening match.

"I don't know if we're going to play Thursday or Friday but whatever day we start I'll be ready to go," said Woods.

"I'm playing a three-times major championship winner. It's going to be a good fight and it's going to be a lot of fun.

"I get in my little world. We can be friends afterward, that's fine. That's the way it is." While Woods has flourished in the match play pressure-cooker, Singh has yet to warm to the format, never advancing past the second round.

The workaholic Fijian will also have to quickly rediscover the form that led him to nine PGA Tour titles last season as he looks to break out of a minor slump. *Reuters*

Els, Garcia bolster JW golf roster

BEIJING—Leading golfers including world No. 3 Ernie Els and sixth ranked Sergio Garcia have signed up for the $2.3-million Johnnie Walker classic in Beijing.

The event, which counts toward the European, Asian and Australasian Tours, will be held at the Jack Nicklaus-designed Pine Valley Golf Resort and Country Club from April 21 to 24.

Other stars teeing off include defending champion Miguel Angel Jimenez of Spain and Britain's Nick Faldo, a winner in 1990 and 1993.

South Korean number one Choi Kyung-ju and China's leading player Zhang Lian-wei will lead the Asian challenge.

"We are excited to welcome more of the best and most inspiring names in golf to our tournament to join what is shaping up to be one of our strongest fields in the 14-year history of our event," said Johnnie Walker spokesperson Ben Anderson.

It is the first time the event, one of the top tournaments in the early part of the year, has been held in mainland China, although Hong Kong first hosted the event in 1990.

The European Tour already sanctions four other tournaments in China where golf is growing in popularity after being outlawed for decades under the country's communist leadership.

Already this season, China has hosted the Volvo Open won by Stephen Dodd and the Hong Kong Open won by Jimenez.

The southern island of Hainan will host the TCL Classic next month and the BMW Asian Open will be played in Shanghai in May.

Jimenez is an expert at winning in Asia and he last year drove his way to his best ever season as a professional.

His title defense is expected to come under threat from Els, last year's European Tour Order of Merit winner and the Johnnie Walker champion in 1997 and 2003.

Last year, Els, known as the "Big Easy," won five tournaments worldwide. He finished second in the US Masters and British Open. *AFP*

AI MIYAZATO misses course record by one shot. AFP

Miyazato backs up star label, fires opening 63

GOLD COAST, Australia—Japan's Ai Miyazato, touted as the next big thing in women's golf, looked the part Thursday in the first round of the ANZ Ladies Masters.

The 19-year-old Miyazato, cheered on by a gallery of several thousand—many of them Japanese golf fans visiting the popular Australian tourist area—shot a course-record-equaling 9-under 63 to take a three-shot lead at Royal Pines.

Miyazato won five tournaments on the Japanese tour last year and led her country to a World Cup win two weeks ago in South Africa, when she fired a final-round 67 where no other player could better 72.

Australia's Katherine Hull, who had a 66 and sits in second place, played in Miyazato's group along with four-time Masters winner Karrie Webb. All three were affected by the extra attention placed on their group.

Overzealous photographers and television cameramen were given a warning by tournament officials later Thursday because of the delays they caused in play.

Hull was impressed with Miyazato, who missed a birdie putt from 12 feet on her last hole that would have broken the course record.

Miyazato, who stands barely 5 feet (1.52 meters) in her golf spikes, came to the Masters—a joint European and Australian tour event—with dozens of media and documentary filmmakers from Japan, where she's as popular as soccer star David Beckham is in England.

Playing the tougher back nine first, Miyazato went out in 4-under 31 before starting the front with birdies on the first four holes. She equaled Webb's course mark from 1999.

Sweden's Linda Wessberg, and Australia's Nikki Campbell and Kirsty Taylor were tied for third after 67s. *AP*

2012 OLYMPIC BID

New York offers money, security, Bush support

NEW YORK—International Olympic Committee members received finance and security assurances for New York's 2012 Olympic bid Wednesday plus a videotaped pledge of support from United States President George W. Bush.

A 13-person IOC evaluation committee heard Bush vow full backing for the $3.6-billion bid in the third day of private meetings, boosting deputy mayor and bid founder Dan Doctoroff's hopes of beating four rivals for the Games.

"What he said was a very strong statement of support," Doctoroff said. "He demonstrated great passion for the Olympic movement, an appreciation for the power of the Olympic movement. That can't help but instill confidence." Roland Betts, a wealthy college friend of Bush who stands to make a fortune on the Games, was the president's representative in the IOC talks and would be a direct link to the White House on a New York Games organizing committee.

"Hearing the level of the commitment from the President and one of his closest friends can't help but reassure them we will be able to deliver upon our promises," Doctoroff said.

Betts would directly benefit from a New York Games because he owns the Chelsea Piers property adjacent to a planned 70,000-seat Olympic Stadium, although the land is not yet obtained for that $1.4 billion project.

The IOC panel makes its only public comments here Thursday before departing. It will prepare a report on finalists New York, Madrid, Paris, Moscow and London in advance of the IOC's July 6 vote at a meeting in Singapore.

A $3-billion budget for staging the Games, featuring $2.8 billion in expenses and a $492-million fund for cost overruns, was presented to the IOC panel. *AFP*

OLYMPIC champ Nadia Comaneci hugs her former coach and US Women's Gymnastics coach Bela Karolyi after the press conference. AFP

Bernis, Agojo top of the rosters in 10th DHL golf

BERNIS

AGOJO

JUN BERNIS tries to defend the first of three titles he won last year as he leads the star-studded cast in the 10th DHL-WWWExpress National Amateur Golf Championships unfolding March 8 at the north course of the Canlubang golf complex in Laguna.

Jayvie Agojo, the hottest player in the distaff side with at least five victories, including the RP Ladies Open, likewise opens her title-retention bid in the accompanying 54-hole tournament organized and conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines in cooperation with Cangolf.

Bernis thwarted Juvic Pagunsan's final-round charge to rule last year's staging of this annual event sponsored by DHL World Express and WWWExpress.

Winningest player

The Canlubang hotshot also won the national amateur championship at Villamor and then went on to rule the Samsung Amateur Tour to emerge the winningest player in his division in 2004.

But the 31-year-old Bernis will have his hands full against the very field he dominated a year ago, including Cangolf teammates Boyet Saragoza, Abe Rosal, and Pagunsan, the best Filipino finisher at second place in last year's Philippine Open at Riviera.

Others out to foil Bernis' title-retention bid are Jay Bayron, Artemio Murakami, Michael Bibat and Marvin Dumandan.

Agojo, an incoming golf scholar at the Pepperdine University, is fancied to run away with the ladies crown owning to her superb form of late.

Southern rout

She romped away with the Southern Ladies Open crown last week, firing back-to-back 66s to all but settle the issue with still a round left.

Carmelette Villaroman will be Agojo's chief rival. She rallied with a 63 in the final round of the Southern Ladies but still lost by seven points under the Molave scoring system.

The other contenders are World Amateurs veterans Lora Roberto and Anya Tanpinco, and club bet Lina de Guzman.

Deadline for submission of entries is on March 5 at 12 noon.

Entry fee is pegged at P2,500 for men and P2,000 for ladies, inclusive of one practice round. For inquiries, call NGAP at 5256987 or 5245160 or 5211587 (fax) or Cangolf at (049) 5491363.

SPORTSWATCH

MCC chess team meet starts tomorrow

THE FIRST edition of the MCC Amateur Chess Team Tournament gets under way at 12 noon tomorrow at the J&F Divino Building at 967 Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City. Twenty teams have confirmed their participation in this P70,000 two-day tournament. Among them are the Mark Paragua-led Mayor Guillermo squad, Flower Power, Facfob-BOC NIA, La Salle, GM Thunderjet, Darea, SSS, Department of Education, Department of Agrarian Reform, Minglanilla Tsunami, Triple Blocks, CMI Iligan Realty, College of St. Benilde and teams from the cities of Manila, Marikina, Parañaque, and Caloocan and Meycauayan. Other interested teams may register at least one hour before the tournament starts. For inquiries, call 4358412 or 0916-8521069. This quarterly event is sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and supported by Tempo Services Inc. It is open to all chess clubs in private and government firms, schools and universities. Each team is composed of three regulars and one alternate. A team can field a master who will play in Board 1 only. The average rating of the team must not exceed 2000.

Nadera defends La Union Open title

INTERNATIONAL Master Barlo Nadera lead entries in the 4th La Union Open chess tournament slated March 7 at the La Union provincial capitol in San Fernando City. The annual event, held as part of the activities of La Union's 155th founding anniversary and the seventh year of San Fernando as a city, is sponsored by the provincial government headed by Gov. Victor F. Ortega and the city government of San Fernando led by Mayor Mary Jane C. Ortega, and sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP). Prominent players expected to compete in the rich tournament include Grandmasters Eugene Torre and Nelson Mariano II, GM-candidate Mark Paragua, International Masters Jayson Gonzales, Ronald Bancod, Fide master Fernie Donguines, and reigning Asian zonal champion Ronald Dableo. At stake in the weeklong competition are cash prizes for the top 20 finishers, including the lion's purse of P75,000 for the champion. For inquiries, call tournament director Joseph A. Dumuk at 0917-3943412 or the NCFP secretariat at 4351114.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Showdown of big guns in Pasay derby

AN INTERESTING showdown pitting mainstays of the Gentleman Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) against their counterparts from the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association will be the main draw when the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit hosts a major 4-cock derby today with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten as sponsors. Derby host Allan Siaco of ASF Group said more than 60 fights are lined up today. Seeing action for GCAP are Tony Lasala, popular campaigner Patrick Antonio, Benjie Lim, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Gerry Ramos, Boy Royo, Lito Orillaza, Pepito Ngo and the Magic Wing Sundance group. Bannering the PCCA are two-time world champion William Go, Joey Lapid, Vice Mayor Gene Avendaño, Jack Chung, Jake Macasaet, Madison Go, Lito Alcantara, Inger Valdez, Ramon Mancenares, Terence Madlambayan and Joel Fernando. The next 4-cock derby unfolds on March 4 with Avendaño as host. Slated on March 7, 9 and 11 is the P1.2-million Miko Fatman 6-Cock Derby with Pepito Ngo as host. For inquiries, call 8431890, 8431746 or 8166750.

TRIGGERMAN SPARKS SHOOT-OUT: The PBA's all-time three-point king, Allan Caidic, shows why he is called the "Triggerman" during the preliminaries for the Accel 3-point Shoot-out Challenge at the Ateneo gym in Loyola Heights last Saturday. Looking on is Sporteum president Willie Ortiz (left). Apart from discovering long-range shooting talents, the Accel challenge emphasizes the immeasurable value of the three-point shot in tight basketball games.

Softball gem's soft heart for tearjerkers

By Dennis U. Eroa, *Inquirer Libre Sports Editor*

MUYCO: MVP, Rookie of the Year and best pitcher rolled into one

CLOIENE Muyco's life, just like her favorite movies, is starting to turn into a blockbuster.

The country's newest softball sensation, whose relaxation route takes her to movie houses, is beating the path to softball greatness at such tremendous speed that her varsity coach at Adamson University has paid her the ultimate compliment.

"Right now, she's the Adamson team," gushed Lady Falcons coach and baseball legend Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera. "She's the biggest news in collegiate softball."

The words are not empty praise.

The 5-foot-6 Muyco is gifted with a powerful pitching arm that can deliver risers that baffle opposing hitters. On offense, Muyco is deadly at belting singles, making her a well-rounded player like her idol, Derek Jeter of the New York Yankees.

But what really sets her apart from all the softball rookies during the 67th season of the UAAP was her composure.

She hardly looked like a 17-year-old the way she handled the pressure during the championship game against the University of Santo Tomas Tigresses.

Winning confidence

"I was nervous during the championship, but I did not think we were going to lose," Muyco said.

Muyco was superb in the best-of-three title series held at the Tigresses' home field.

She helped Adamson take Game 1, 7-4, and was even deadlier in Game 2.

She went 4-of-4 at bat, including a two-run double in the first inning—all the while limiting UST to four hits. She also struck out five players in a no-relief job as Adamson swept the series with an 8-5 Game 2 win.

She went on to set a record—she not only bagged the Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year trophies, but the best pitcher plum as well.

After that, Muyco made sure she wouldn't miss her favorite love story on the big screen.

Giggles and tears

Tagging along her best friend and teammate, Thinsey de Jose, a right-fielder, Muyco giggled and shed tears, too, as they watched "Let the Love Begin," a movie about teenage love.

"I really like watching movies," said Muyco, who's majoring in Physical Education.

Wooed in Bacolod by talent scouts from various colleges, Muyco didn't think twice in accepting an invitation from Codiñera deputy Ana Santiago to join Adamson, a school hungry for sporting heroes.

"I've heard a lot about Adamson softball," Muyco said. "'Thanks to the athletic scholarship, I can now go to college. My parents can't afford to send me here on their own."

But life in the Big City, Muyco admits, can be lonely at times.

"I miss my family," said Muyco, who has seven siblings.

The Adamson community, however, need not worry about their star player packing her bags and heading for home.

The movie theaters, which are just a fastball away from the Adamson quarters, help a lot in chasing away her blues.

Nestea beach volley draws 72 teams

SEVENTY-TWO teams from 44 colleges and universities across the country are seeing action in the elimination round of the Nestea Beach Volley 2005 starting with the Luzon leg slated April 1-3 at the La Salle Greenhills courts in Mandaluyong City.

Teams from the Visayas and Mindanao dispute the regional berths in the national finals on April 5-7 at a still undetermined venue.

Qualifiers from the two elimination rounds will then compete in the semifinals and championship rounds in sunny Boracay from May 5-7.

"We're thrilled to bring to the public once more the ninth edition of the Nestea Beach Volley," said Nestea brand manager Tina Samaco. "Over the years, [the tournament] has been synonymous with the summer of fun and exceptional beach volleyball competition."

ACTION was intense during last year's finals.

Up for grabs is over P500,000 in prizes, with the champion teams in the men's and women's categories each getting P100,000 and P50,000 worth of sports equipment for their school.

Second placers get P50,000 and a trophy and third placers P25,000 and a trophy.

Schools from Luzon include Adamson, Ateneo, St. Benilde, La Salle, Far Eastern, Letran, Lyceum, Pampanga Agricultural College, PATTS, Philippine Christian University, St. Francis, St. Jude, St. Louis, San Sebastian, University of Asia and the Pacific, University of Baguio, University of the Cordilleras, University of Perpetual Help System Laguna, UP-Diliman and UP-Los Baños.

The tournament is backed by Speedo, Mikasa, Cebu Pacific, Hey Jude Resorts, La Salle Greenhills, Villa de Oro, Coppertone, Boracay Regency, Le Soleil, Power Plant Mall, National Sports Grill and clickthecity.com.

Red Bull taps basketball guru Addison

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DESPITE a poor record in the Philippine Basketball Association last season, Red Bull is still a team to watch in this year's foreign-flavored conference which gets going on March 6.

Although wounded by the departure of Davonn Harp and Mick Pennisi, the Barakos are still dangerous following a long, serious and rigorous preparation. I expect better from the Photokina franchise this time around, which means Red Bull will give the other teams a run for their money.

Head coach Yeng Guiao and team manager Tony Chua have put together a respectable and competitive team anchored on old reliables Lordy Tugade, Junthy Valenzuela, Topex Robinson and the vastly improved Rico Villanueva. It has also hired Darlon Johnson, a 6-foot-9 import from Las Vegas who saw action in the ABA (American Basketball Association) tournament.

And to further bolster its bid to regain its lofty standing, the team acquired the services of Nathaniel "EA" Addison Jr., an American basketball strength and conditioning specialist from Long Beach, California.

Just who is EA Addison Jr?

An experienced basketball coach whose forte is developing speed, strength and individual skills of the players, Addison's most recent clients include NBA cagers Dorell Wright (Miami Heat), Joaquin Hawkins (Houston Rockets, Golden State Warriors), Charles O'Bannon (Detroit Pistons, Italy), Pro Skills Academy and Frontline Sports Management, just to name a few.

"I have trained athletes of all levels," he stated in his bio-sheet. "My experience has landed me jobs from youth to professional ranks working alongside the best coaches and with the best teams and organizations sports has to offer."

In 1993-1997, Addison was the recreation leader specialist of the city of Long Beach where he also became its sports coordinator in 1997-2002.

From 2001 to 2004, Addison held various positions such as the speed, skills and fitness coach at Long Beach Poly and Cypress College women's basketball; speed and quickness and skills instructor at Pro Skills Academy and Frontline Sports Management; basketball and skills coach at Team Long Beach, and strength and conditioning coach at the ABA.

And what has he got to offer?

According to Addison, he is here to develop the Barakos' individual skills and team concepts. In addition, he said, the players will be taught how to avoid hardcourt injuries.

"There are a lot of good trainers out there, but what we have is unique," he stressed, adding "after your athletes are trained by us they'll have the knowledge and wisdom to keep up their training and growth for life. In other words: we'll teach them to 'teach themselves.'"

Addison has been signed to a one-year contract by the Photokina franchise owned by sportsman and fitness buff George Chua.

***

PSC CLARIFIES. In a recent column, I asked, "How true is the report that Philippine Sports Commission OIC Butch Ramirez kept several NSAs (except wushu) in the dark about his recent trip to China with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo?" From our mailbox, comes this clarification from Mr. Ramirez. Excerpts:

"We thank you for your efforts in writing about the recent trip of the undersigned and the First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo in China. Let me provide you with the following clarifications:

1. There is absolutely no intention or any attempt on our part to keep some National Sports Associations "in the dark" about the outcome of the bilateral meeting we forged with the State General Administration of China.

In fact, a day after our arrival from China, the details of the meeting were already out and printed in media, including in the Philippine Daily Inquirer. I even attended a press forum to inform the general public about the successful tie-up of RP-China in the area of sports development, specifically China's willingness to assist our athletes in their training for the coming 23rd SEA Games.

2. As a protocol, the undersigned submitted a Terminal Report to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo containing the major points of the RP-China cooperation agreement. A separate official report was also submitted to the president of the Philippine Olympic Committee—Hon. Jose Cojuangco—and coursed through the POC secretary general Mr. Steve Hontiveros.

The PSC is indeed very transparent in dealing with this issue especially knowing that the China trip will bring tremendous benefits to Philippine sports. I hope this fully clarifies the points raised in your column."

FREEDOM CUP SHOWDOWN

Empire King, Cover Girl clash again

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

EMPIRE King dispatched West Bound five days ago but will he be as successful against the latter's stablemate Cover Girl?

The highly awaited rematch between the 2004 Horse of the Year and the 3-Year-Old Filly of the Year takes place today during the P750,000 Freedom Cup race at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Cover Girl beat Empire King in their last meeting, leaning on her familiarity with the track in Carmona, Cavite, where she has scored five wins in eight runs thus far.

PDI PHOTO

EMPIRE King (above) tries to preserve his sizzling form against Cover Girl (right).

"Excited *ako* each time *makakalaban namin si* Empire King. *Dapat laging handa* (I'm excited each time we're up against Empire King. We must be ready at all times)," said Jonathan Hernandez, Cover Girl's partner.

In contrast, Empire King has only won twice—both regular races—in eight outings at the SLLP. In fact, it is on the same track where he tasted his biggest setback last year—a 10th and last place finish in the Legend Cup.

But the son of Perfect Halo displayed the heart of a champion by bouncing back since then, winning the Presidential Gold Cup and only recently, the Philracom Open where he drubbed West Bound under the guidance of regular rider Jeffrey Ladiana.

"*Tiwala ako sa kakayahan ng kabayo ko. Magandang laban tiyak yan sa* Freedom Cup (I believe a lot in my horse. I think it will be a good race)," said Ladiana, who was tapped to ride Empire King again in the Philracom Open after the colt lost with Pat Dilema aboard in the "Karera Para sa Puso."

Ten other gallopers are joining the 1,750-meter race being held to commemorate the historic Edsa I Revolution.

Aside from preventing a two-horse affair between Empire King and Cover Girl, defending champion Free Wind, Timber Eagle, Stowaway Lass, Flying Princess, Midnight Star, Chariot of Fire, American Woman, Moab, Marque and Perfect Storm are also seeking the P450,000 winner's prize.

Free Wind is trying to relive his glory days although he has had so-so runs lately, including a sixth-place finish in his last assignment.

Aussie import Timber Eagle, with three victories in six runs thus far at the SLLP, is also considered a big threat along with New Zealand's Flying Princess, who is currently on a four-race winning streak.

Stowaway Lass and American Woman are also capable of pulling it off over the long route, along with Moab.

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Caden Dance 2. Glory Belle/Cry Freedom 3.
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Princess
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Miracle 3. Earl's Game
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Raven
Race 6--1. Maximus 2. Jaw Breaker 3. Princess Gillian
4. Sir Olizon
Race 7--1. Empire King 2. Cover Girl 3. Timber Eagle
4. Stowaway Lass 5. Marque/Moab 6. Midnight Star
Race 8--1. Sweet Felicity 2. Western Dancer 3. Great
Tower
Race 9--1. Unrivaled 2. Split Decision 3. Superwoman
4. Take Ten 5. Uncle Buck/Wings to Fly
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Mare
Race 11--1. Golden Lance 2. Apex 3. Jay Nicole
Race 12--1. Scrap of Gold/Puede Ba 2. Haz magic 3.
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Race 13--1. The Strategist 2. Sniper 3. Great Year 4
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Sports now in CCM curriculum

MANILA has included sports in its school curriculum in line with the plan to establish the Manila Sports Academy.

Arnold "Ali" Atienza, chair of the Manila Sports Council (Masco) and son of Mayor Lito Atienza, said that a Bachelor in Physical Education and Sports course is now being offered at the City College of Manila (CCM).

"One of our long-term plans is to provide the city's deserving athletes with proper college education through scholarships while giving them the time and tools to train and further improve their skills," said Atienza yesterday.

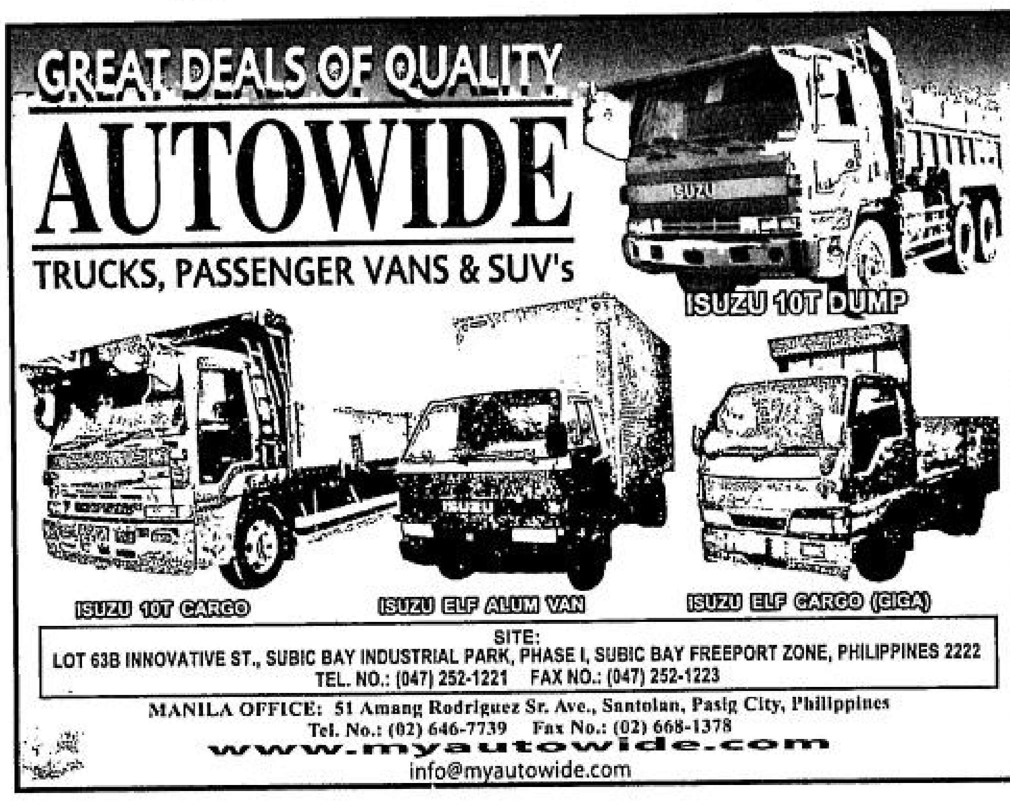
"It will also serve as an avenue to develop future coaches and trainers who can share and teach their expertise to the city's youth."

Atienza said plans for establishing the Manila Sports Academy where outstanding performers in the Manila Youth Games, specially athletes from the city's public schools, may be given free college education, started since the launching of the MY Games in 2002.

"It is one of our dreams for the city's youth," said Atienza, who thanked CCM president Dr. Rodrigo Malunhao and his board for their support.

Atienza also acknowledged the help of Philippine Center for Sports Medicine director Dr. Jose Raul Canlas, and various heads of national sports associations.

The MY Games is a sports development program for children aged 15 and under and is a vital part of Mayor Atienza's Buhayin ang Maynila program.



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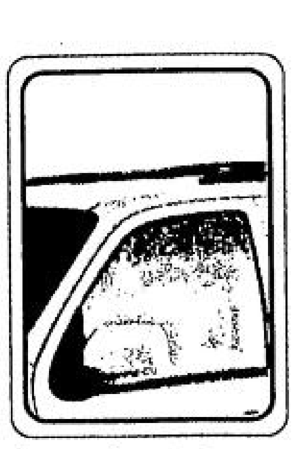
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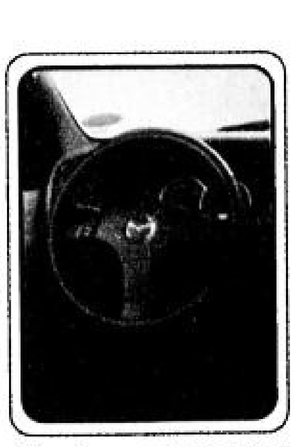
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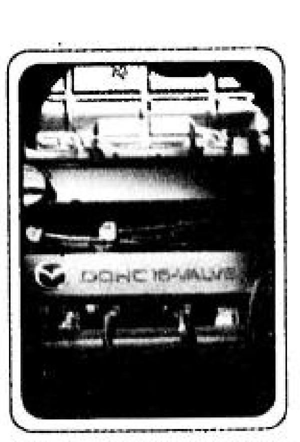
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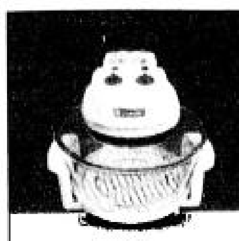
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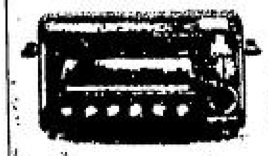
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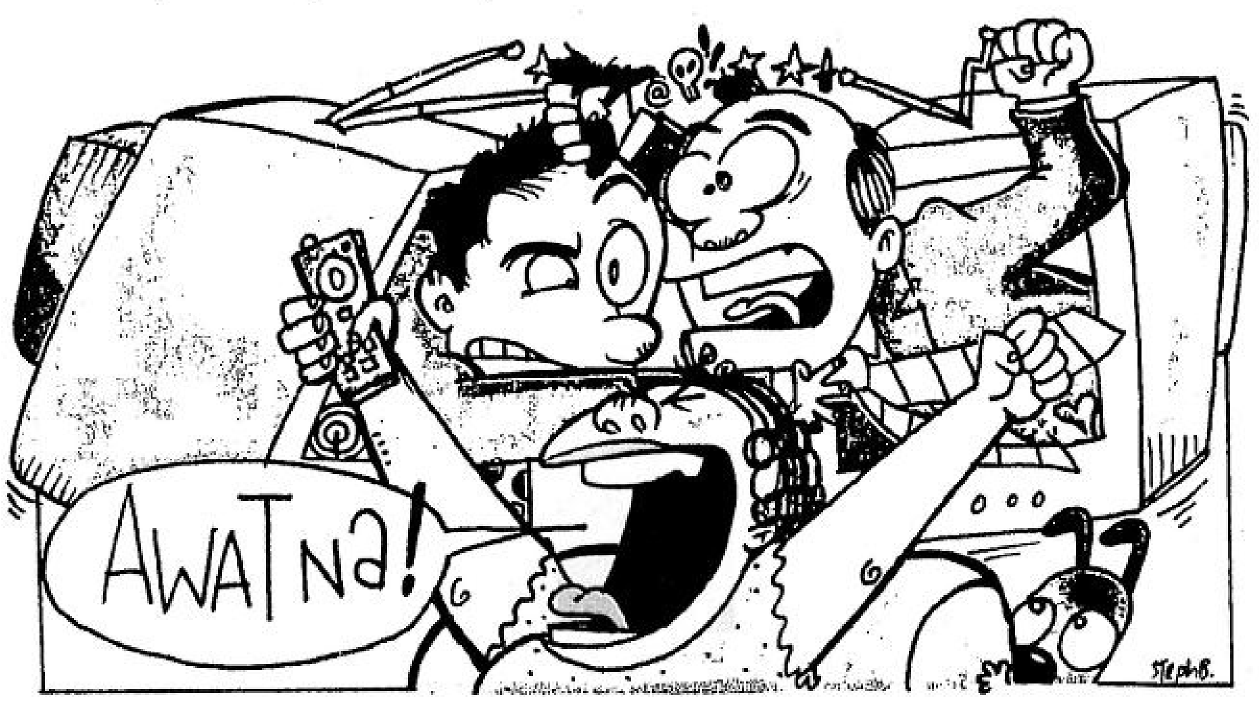


Ceasefire on scandals

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Contributor

THE GOOD news is, the television networks and talent managers are exploring ways to settle differences resulting from the airing of scandalous material lately on movie talk shows.

Meanwhile, a ceasefire.

On Sunday, ABS-CBN's "The Buzz" pulled out a "video essay" on sex videos in Tinseltown. Host Boy Abunda explained: "The show is sensitive to the opinions of televiewers, the print media, industry leaders, and the MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board)."

And these days, according to Ed Instrella, a founding member of the Professional Artist Managers Inc. (Pami) "when talent coordinators call to invite our talents, they assure us that there will be no discussion of controversies."

On Monday, Pami members met with a power panel of ABS-CBN executives. The managers had sought the meeting in a letter dated Feb. 16 and sent to all concerned TV stations. GMA 7 has set its own conference with Pami on March 3.

In the last few weeks, on an almost daily basis, televiewers have witnessed virtual mudslinging between the two top networks' stables of mainstays

Relief

ABS-CBN's response to the Pami request has given the managers "a sense of relief," according to another founding member, Shirley Kuan.

Pami's letter—contemplated by the members more than a week before the first draft was drawn—was finalized and delivered after a two-part series came out in INQUIRER Entertainment calling attention to the worsening situation in the talk show landscape. The series, titled "Presence of Malice," ran on Feb. 17 and 18.

Both sides now

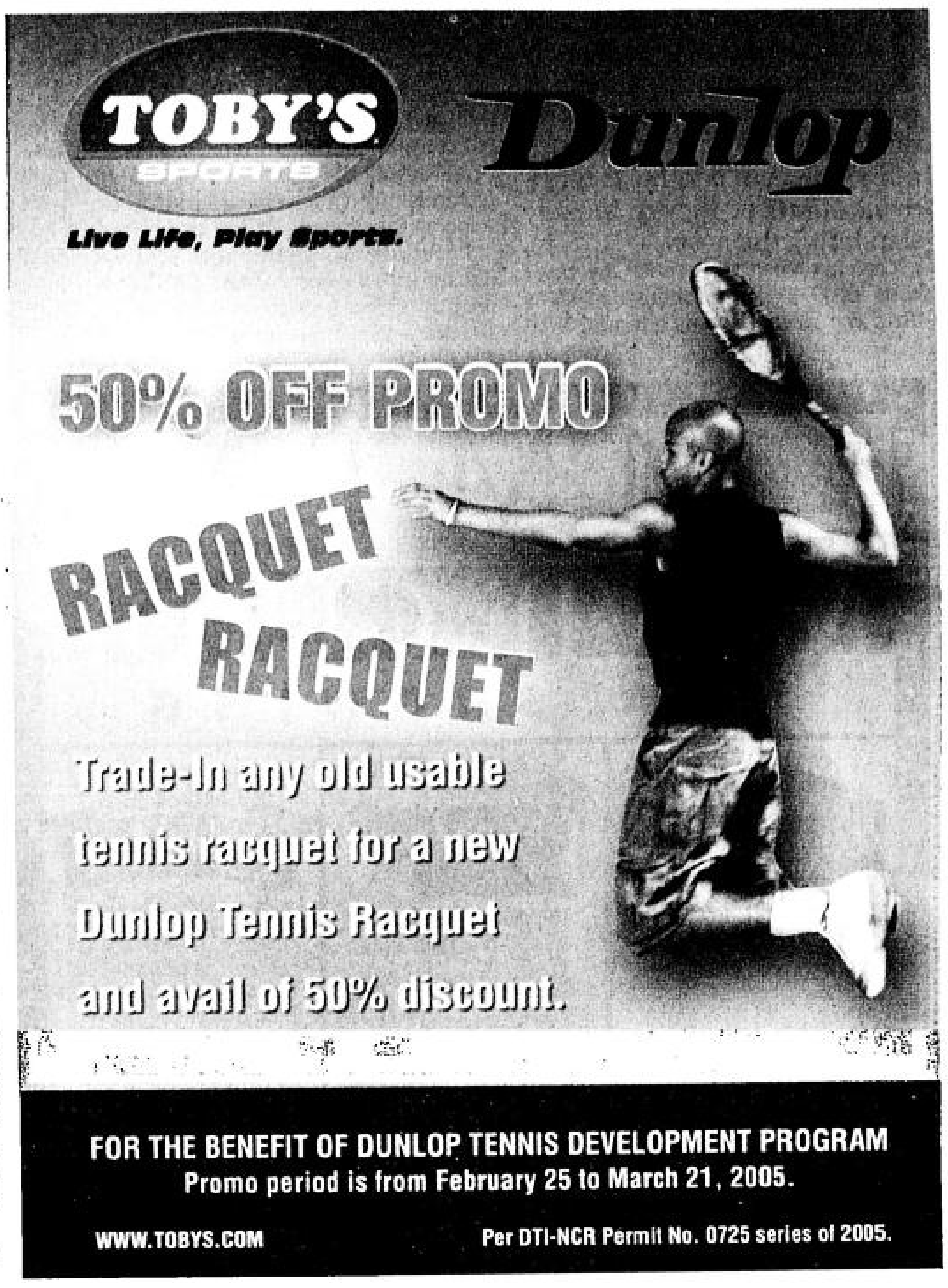
On Feb. 18, the MTRCB called the attention of "The Buzz" producers for airing "very explicit" excerpts from a sex video allegedly "starring" GMA 7 contract star Ethel Booba.

That same day, ABS-CBN set the meeting with Pami members.

during the Feb. 21 discussion were Charo Santos-Concio, ABS-CBN executive vice president and head of Entertainment; Cory Vidanes, senior vice president for TV; Enrico Santos, vice president for Creative Synergy; and Deo Endrinal, vice president for Talk, Variety, and Reality.

CEASEFIRE/ A2-2

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Carmina: What about extremely personal attacks?/A2-2



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What about extremely personal attacks?

By Marinel R. Cruz
and Anne Luisa Villarico

IS ABS-CBN so desperate that it allows extremely personal attacks aimed at talents of its rival network? I don't mind it if they criticize our show. *Pero pati hosts tinitira na nila*(But they're already slandering the hosts."

Carmina Villaroel, one of the three hosts of GMA 7's morning talk show "Sis," was referring to an editorial aired on ABS-CBN's "The Buzz" last Sunday.

The editorial tackled the ongoing word war among the talents of the two networks. ABS-CBN claimed that GMA 7 artists were the first to criticize talents of the "Kapamilya" network.

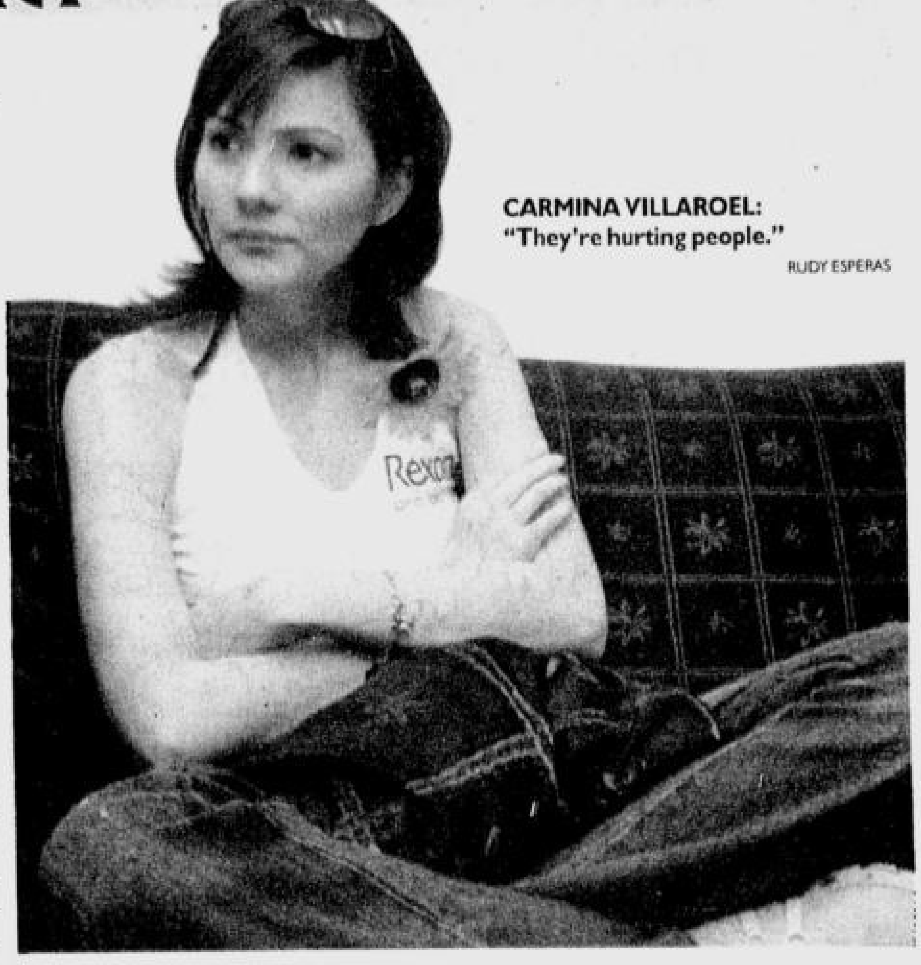
ABS-CBN accused Carmina and sisters Gelli and Janice de Belen of hurling verbal abuse at Roderick Paulate and Amy Perez, saying the two were "too old" to be competing with the all-girl trio for No. 1 spot in the ratings.

Roderick and Amy, with Marvin Agustin, are the hosts of ABS-CBN's new program "Most Requested Show," which airs in the same time slot as "Sis."

ABS-CBN shot back by saying the three female hosts should first look at their imperfections before publicly discussing others' flaws.

Not so blind

"It's not in our personality to say nasty things about other people," said Carmina. "The attacks didn't start from us. I think it began with a blind item saying *wala na raw kaming* career *ni* Gelli (Gelli and I have no more career). The blind item also verbally attacked *Ate* Janice. Although these were just blind items, it was obvious that they were referring to us."



CARMINA VILLAROEL: "They're hurting people."

RUDY ESPERAS

Carmina insisted that her group never said anything negative about Roderick and Amy. "*Kuya* Dick [Roderick's nickname] and Amy are very close to me. We're very good friends. I could never say any such thing. Besides, Gelli, *Ate* Janice and I realize we're not that young, either."

She said Janice briefly talked about the issue in the Feb. 16 episode of "Sis." And "that was it," said Carmina, refusing to elaborate.

Fortunately, she added, the controversy did not affect her friendship with either Roderick and Amy. They continue to send one another text messages, she says. "We would tell each other, *'Trabaho lang ito ha?*(It just comes with the job). And when their show on ABS-CBN was about to start, *Kuya* Dick called to inform me that their show would be in the same time slot."

Product endorser

What would she like to say to her former network? "Nothing. *Ayaw ko nang patulan*(I'd rather not take any more part in it). What [ABS-CBN] is doing is very hurtful. I will simply carry on, at the same time making sure that I'm not hurting anyone."

Carmina visited the INQUIRER office to promote Rexona's new product, Pro-Balance Deodorant. "This is something new," she said of the product. "I believe in it. I'm also excited because it's my first time to be a spokesperson of something. I feel that this campaign is a big help to women."

Along with comedians Marissa Sanchez, Gladys Guevarra and Eugene Domingo, Carmina will be featured in a production called "Kili-Kili Monologues," which is part of Rexona's "Under-Harm Freedom Through Rexona Pro-Balance" campaign. The production will be seen in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao malls.

FORTUNATELY, the actress says, her friendship with ABS-CBN stars Roderick Paulate and Amy Perez is solid.

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Ceasefire on TV scandals

From page A2-1

On the opposite side were 16 of the 24-strong Pami, led by president June Torrejon-Rufino and chair Ethel Ramos: Kuan, Instrella, Wyngard Tracy, Jojo Dingcong, Lolit Solis, Arnold Vegafria, Vera Isberto, Leo Dominguez, Angge, Gina Martinez, Angeli Pangilinan, Dolor Guevara, Norma Japitana, and Girlie Rodis.

Kuan told INQUIRER: "Ms Santos and her team were very receptive."

Evidence

During the dialogue, Pami leaders cited at least 15 specific instances of "irresponsible reporting."

One that begged to be discussed was the airing of the so-called Aga Muhlach exposé —bared by a former live-in partner—on GMA 7's "Star Talk."

As a result, writer Nitz Miralles said in the tabloid Arriba, Muhlach contemplated legal action against the show and the network.

Drastic measures such as this one is precisely what the Pami seeks to prevent by meetings with the networks.

"We can't eradicate scandals," Kuan stressed. "But we hope the talk shows do not make scandals their staples."

Nonoy Zuñiga's 'The Love Album'

AFTER TWO decades in the business and 12 albums, Nonoy Zuñiga is still waxing romantic in his latest outing, "The Love Album," released by Viva Records.

"We originally listened to 30 songs," Nonoy says. Then the final 12 to be included in the collection were picked by VR communications chief Baby Gil, album producer Eugene Villaluz, Nonoy and his wife Grace.

Of the selections, "What Matters Most," originally by Kenny Rankin, has "a special place in my heart," the singing doctor says. "I sang it for my wife at the start of our whirlwind courtship. It is also a most requested song in weddings, birthdays and anniversaries that I perform in, and even in my live shows.

The carrier single is Stevie Wonder's "Too Shy To Say." Nonoy did a duet with Regine Velasquez, "When I Fall In Love." Among the other songs are: "Someone Who Cares," The Bread's "If," "Moon River" from "Breakfast at Tiffany's," the Beatles' "In My Life," "I'll Be Seeing You," and a bouncy version of "I Only Have Eyes For You."

Love Duets

UNIVERSAL Records presents "Love Duets," the first of its "Best of OPM" series. The newly released CD contains: "Let the Love Begin" by Kyla and Jerome John Hughes; "Please be Careful with my Heart" by Jose Mari Chan and Regine Velasquez; "Sana Maulit Muli" by Kyla and Gary Valenciano; "In Love with You" by Regine and Jacky Cheung; "Pagbigyan ang Puso" by Karylle and Jerome John Hughes; "Kung Mawawala Ka" by Ogie Alcasid and Karylle;

"My Girl, My Woman, My Friend" by Jose Mari Chan and Janet Basco; "Only Selfless Love" by Jed Madela and Karylle; "Umagang Kay Ganda" by Ray-An Fuentes and Tillie Moreno; and "Till My Heartaches End" by Arnee and Sean Wong.

Gold soundtrack

THE ORIGINAL soundtrack album of the movie "Let the Love Begin" from GMA Films has been certified gold.

The album showcases the theme song "Let the Love Begin," performed by Kyla and Jerome John Hughes. Other attractions are "Ms Serious" and "Alipin," both performed by the Shamrock band.

Kyla and Jerome were awarded Gold Record plaques recently on GMA 7's Sunday noontime show, "SOP." Present were Universal Records marketing manager Kathleen Dy Go and Ito Rapadas, album producer.

Dimsum

GMA Records introduces its latest find, a band called Dimsum, now out with its first album. The album contains eleven original tracks, including the hit carrier single "TY4URLUV," and one revival hit song from the Hotdogs, "Beh Buti Nga."

The band features two exhilarating vocalists, Abbey Tereza and Max Coquia. Max sings Stevie Wonder and Steve Perry songs, while Abby is definitely a Beyonce sound-alike. Khay Ebcas sings back-up vocals; on bass is Ibey Haber; on guitar, Ping Bates; on keyboards EJ Alpa; and on drums, Lester Legisma.

Former Hotdog key man Dennis Garcia is the band's manager and musical director.

"Dimsum" is available on CDs and cassettes.

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CONSTANTINE PG13 12:00,2:35,5:10,7:45,10:20	SON OF THE MASK GP 11:15,1:25,3:35, 5:45,7:55,10:05	LEMONY SNICKET'S UNFORTUNATE EVENTS GP 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10
AVIATOR PG13 11:50,3:10,6:30,9:50	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA PG13 12:30,3:20,6:10,9:00	AVIATOR PG13 12:30,3:50,7:10,10:30

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GUARANTEED SEATS
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1 LEMONY SNICKET'S: (Series of Unfortunate Events) 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13
2 THE AVIATOR 12:30, 4:00, 7:30, 11:00 PG-13
3 CONSTANTINE 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 PG-13
4 MASK 2: SON OF THE MASK PLEASE CALL FOR SCREENING TIME

star group of cinemas movie guide IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

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3 Let The Love Begin	1 Infection	1 Kung Fu Hustle
4 Constantine	2 Night Job	2 Reserved
5 Night Job	3 Let The Love Begin	
	4 Dreamboy	
	5 Constantine	
	6 Son of the Mask	

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CINEMA 1 SON OF THE MASK 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:10 GP
CINEMA 2 AVIATOR 10:50, 2:15, 5:40, 9:05 PG13
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SHANG CINEPLEX
① SON OF THE MASK MTRCB (GP) 12:05, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 LMF
② LEMONY SNICKET'S A Series of Unfortunate Events MTRCB (GP) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF
③ AVIATOR MTRCB (PG - 13) 11:00, 2:30, 6:00, 9:30 LMF
④ CONSTANTINE MTRCB (PG - 13) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF
PREMIERE THEATRE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA MTRCB (PG-13) 12:15, 3:10, 6:05, 9:00 LMF
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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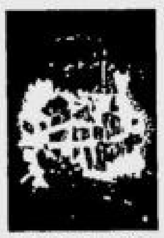
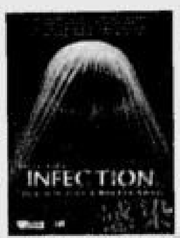
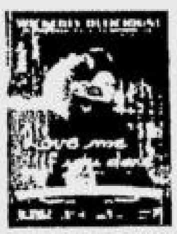

SON OF MASK
MTRCB Rating: G


INFECTION
MTRCB Rating: PG 13

LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENT
MTRCB Rating: G

AVIATOR
MTRCB Rating: PG


LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
MTRCB Rating: R13

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LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
1 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 12:00 FS/12:30 MF/2:50 /5:10/7:30 9:20 LFS / 9:50 LMF / 11:40 END
2 THE AVIATOR 11:40 FS/ 12:10 MF / 3:15 / 6:25 9:15 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 12:30 END

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
4 THE AVIATOR
5 INFECTION
6 PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN
7 ELEKTRA
8 DREAMBOY
9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
10 CONSTANTINE
11 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
12 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city fairview
1 INFECTION
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
3 ELEKTRA
4 CONSTANTINE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 THE AVIATOR
7 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
8 SON OF THE MASK
9 DREAMBOY
10 MEET THE FOCKERS
11 SHALL WE DANCE
12 5 CHILDREN AND IT

sm city north edsa
1 DREAMBOY
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 INFECTION
5 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE smcinemaexclusive
6 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
7 CONSTANTINE
8 THE AVIATOR

sm city sta. mesa
1 SON OF THE MASK
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 THE AVIATOR
4 DREAMBOY
5 CONSTANTINE
6 SHALL WE DANCE
7 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
9 INFECTION
10 ELEKTRA

sm city southmall
1 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 CONSTANTINE
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 ELEKTRA
6 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
7 DREAMBOY
8 THE AVIATOR
9 CONSTANTINE
10 INFECTION

sm city manila
1 MEET THE FOCKERS
2 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 THE AVIATOR
5 SON OF THE MASK
6 CONSTANTINE
7 SHALL WE DANCE
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
9 INFECTION
10 DREAMBOY
11 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
12 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 CONSTANTINE
3 THE AVIATOR
4 SON OF THE MASK

sm city bicutan
1 THE AVIATOR
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 CONSTANTINE

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
3 CONSTANTINE
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 THE AVIATOR
6 RAISE YOUR VOICE

sm city baguio
1 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
2 CONSTANTINE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

sm city batangas
1 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 CONSTANTINE
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE

sm city marilao
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 RACING STRIPES
3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

sm city bacoor
1 DREAMBOY
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 THE AVIATOR
4 INFECTION
5 CONSTANTINE
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
7 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

sm city dasmariñas
1 INFECTION
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
4 CONSTANTINE

sm city lucena
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 MADHOUSE
4 DREAMBOY

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 MUSICAL PUPPET SHOW
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
4 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
5 DREAMBOY
6 SHALL WE DANCE
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 CONSTANTINE

sm city iloilo
1 MEET THE FOCKERS
2 RESERVED
3 WITHOUT A PADDLE
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 CONSTANTINE
6 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT13
7 RESERVED
8 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

sm city davao
1 CONSTANTINE
2 SHALL WE DANCE
3 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 RACING STRIPES
5 DREAMBOY
6 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

sm city cagayan de oro
1 CONSTANTINE
2 ALFIE
3 RACING STRIPES
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

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AYALA CINEMAS THX

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	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1	THX THE AVIATOR	LET THE LOVE BEGIN	LEMONY SNICKET'S	CONSTANTINE 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40	GUARANTEED SEATS THX CONSTANTINE 1:35, 4:00, 6:25, 8:50, 11:15	SON OF THE MASK
2	CONSTANTINE	THE AVIATOR	THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	THE AVIATOR 11:10, 2:25, 5:30, 8:55	GUARANTEED SEATS THX THE AVIATOR 1:00, 4:15, 7:25, 10:45	LEMONY SNICKET'S
3	LEMONY SNICKET'S	CONSTANTINE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX CONSTANTINE 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30		GUARANTEED SEATS SIDEWAYS 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15	SHALL WE DANCE
4	INFECTION	SON OF THE MASK	INFECTION		GUARANTEED SEATS THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30	CONSTANTINE
5	SON OF THE MASK		SON OF THE MASK		GUARANTEED SEATS LEMONY SNICKET'S 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10, 11:30	
6			THE AVIATOR			
7			LET THE LOVE BEGIN			

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Toyota Car Exhibit February 24-28, 2005	Justice League February 25-27 2005	Wellness Revo February 24-27, 2005

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 3 PARK	GREENBELT 3 LOBBY
Greenbelt Alfresco Theatre Nights Coming Soon in March	Vera Wang Gown Exhibit February 17-28, 2005

Onstage

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents Busybody
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Onstage

AYALA CINEMAS

Onstage Greenbelt

in Ayala Center, Makati City is now accepting bookings for concerts, product launches and other corporate events for May to July 2005.

For bookings, please call
Lissa at 752 7862

AYALACENTER

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Feb 19, 11:30AM, 3PM & 6PM
Feb 20, 11:30AM, 2:30PM 4:30PM & 6:30PM
Feb 22, Meet&Greet Glorietta 2 lobby
Glorietta Activity Center
Customer Service Hotlines
Glorietta 752-7272
Greenbelt 752-4853 to 54

ALABANG TOWN

Feb 25 - 27, 11AM, 3PM & 6PM
Activity Center
Customer Service Hotlines
842-2782 & 772-1860

AYALA CENTER CEBU

March 4 - 5, 11AM, 4:30PM & 7PM
March 6, 11AM, 3:30PM & 6:30PM
Activity Center
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AYALA MALLS LoveMall!

A GATHERING OF SUPER HEROES AT THE AYALA MALLS

"WITHOUT A DOUBT ONE OF THE BEST FILMS OF THE YEAR! POWERFUL!"
— Terry Tuemann, TALKING PICTURES

"Brooks makes Spanglish a rich blend of humor and heartbreak."
— Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

"Spanglish is a performer's showcase."
— Mike Clark, USA TODAY

Flor (Paz Vega), a beautiful, native Mexican woman becomes the housekeeper for the affluent, yet troubled, Clasky family (headed by Adam Sandler and Téa Leoni) The result is a wittily perceptive collision of cultures and values, and a refreshingly honest look at such life-altering commitments as marriage, parenting and devotion to family.

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

OPENS MARCH 9 EXCLUSIVELY AT

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From the writer / director of TERMS OF ENDEARMENT and BROADCAST NEWS and the director of AS GOOD AS IT GETS

Spanglish

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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

[illegible]

Film	Times
1 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS • THX	12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
2 SON OF THE MASK 2	10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
3 CONSTANTINE	11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	11:50 2:15 4:40 7:05 9:30
5 INFECTION	10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
6 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	10:40 1:35 4:30 7:25 10:00
7 FOOTSTEPS	11:50 1:50 3:50 5:50 7:50 9:50
8 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
9 MEET THE FOCKERS	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
10 SIDEWAYS	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

ERMITA

536-7809 lc 12

Film	Times
1 CONSTANTINE	10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
5 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	10:20 1:05 4:00 6:55 9:50
6 INFECTION	10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
7 SON OF THE MASK 2	10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

METRO EAST

682-8193 • 682-8100

Film	Times
1 RAY	10:40 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:20
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	11:20 1:45 4:05 6:30 9:00
5 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
6 INFECTION	12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
7 CONSTANTINE	10:35 1:05 3:35 6:05 8:20 10:30
8 SON OF THE MASK 2	12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30

NOVALICHES

935-3229/31

Film	Times
1 CONSTANTINE	11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25
2 SON OF THE MASK 2	11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	10:25 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
4 INFECTION	11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
6 RESERVE	
7 RESERVE	
8 RESERVE	

PIONEER

[illegible]

1 CONSTANTINE
2 SON OF THE MASK 2
3 INFECTION
4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

CITISQUARE MALABON

[illegible]

1 MADHOUSE
2 CONSTANTINE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 BLADE TRINITY

CAINTA

[illegible]

1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 INFECTION
3 SON OF THE MASK 2
4 CONSTANTINE

Exclusive
SCREENING

Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA
February 23 - March 01

Footsteps is an intense thriller that careens through a shocking maze of journalists and legal entanglements. Jason Davis is a reporter who gets [illegible] up that [illegible] to a judge's murder [illegible] D.A. Steve Caren is assigned to the case. Separated from his wife Nancy, Jason meets Amber, an intriguing photographer. There is instant heat between them. As Jason gets increasingly violent death threats, he [illegible] He turns up clues that connect both Amber and [illegible] the murdered judge. In the white-knuckle climax, [illegible] to catch the killer... who could be his lover.

Subject for MTRCB Rating

STA. ROSA

(049) 837-0907

1 CONSTANTINE
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
3 RACING STRIPES
4 RAY
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

LIPA

(043) 757-1664
(043) 312-5870

1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE
5 MADHOUSE

DASMARIÑAS

[illegible]

1 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
2 HONEY
3 CONSTANTINE
4 INFECTION
5 LET THE LOVEBEGIN

ANGELES

(045) 892-2348

1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 CONSTANTINE
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13

IMUS

[illegible]

1 SON OF THE MASK 2
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
4 CONSTANTINE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 INFECTION

STARMILLS

[illegible]

1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 RAISE YOUR VOICE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
5 CONSTANTINE
6 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13

BACOLOD

[illegible]

1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 ALFIE
3 CONSTANTINE
4 MEET THE FOCKERS
5 RACING STRIPES
6 SHALL WE DANCE

ILOILO

(033) 336-8077

1 CONSTANTINE
2 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 WITHOUT A PADDLE

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BEAUTIFUL couple **Sunshir** **Cesar Montano** "took th again, literally and figurati Meng beach Trang, Thailan newed their wedding vow ter!

I teased Shine: "So now y *kayo ni* Buboy (it's the two death and depth do you pa

Shine smiled: "It was re forgettable experience. W ples from different *Nakakatuwa, kasi* (It wa cause) the local press kno were from show biz bac even there, we were tr stars!"

Happiness was writte Shine's face as we talked. T of vows could not have co ter time. Not too long ago, riage seemed in peril be nasty rumor linking Bu "Panaghoy sa Suba" leadi **liana Palermo**. But both s dent only made their love s

"All is forgiven and Shine said. "Being in Thail er brought us closer. We stayed longer. We were so we gained weight. *Puro* meals. Every morning, so assigned to outfit us wit tumes, with matching mak VIP treatment *talaga!*"

Didn't they have any app about going there right a cent tsunami? "Trang is away from Phuket, and th land between them. We we ed about the one-of-a-kin that awaited us, we forgo our fears."

Any baby made in Thail blushed. "*Sana* ... But Sam months old. We want to en girls first!"

Congratulations, Shine Marriage is indeed a si thing. May you continue other's anchor!

Yul Servo in "Mass"

NOW O

Angels in Ameri

WINNER of five Golden Glob ni-Series, Best Actor (Al Pac Streep) and Emma Thompso includes Mary-Louise Parker

The two-part, six-chapter fantasy and reality interact. A directed by Mike Nichols of "

"Angels" is based on the t play by Tony Kushner, which nation"—the sexual, racial, r issues confronting the count when Aids swooped down o Francisco, Los Angeles and

The House of Fly

Directed by Zhang Yimou eign Film in this year's Golde among the Top 10 Films of th Times.

Starring Andy Lau ("Magi Without Thieves") Takeshi K Right and Tempting Heart") "Hero" and "Rush Hour 2").

Before Sunrise/

Warner Home Video has VCD edition box set of Richa rise" and "Before Sunset." E star in "Before Sunrise" as t meet on a train in Europe an gether. Nine years later, in " again, unexpectedly, in Paris

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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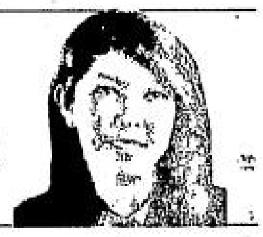
nd Buboy!
k-or-swim
o be each

Buboy and Sunshine take the plunge again

DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Ann Carvajal

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed watching **Yul Servo** in Tanghalang Pilipino's "Mass" (based on the award-winning novel by **F Sionil Jose**) at the CCP Huseng Batute Theater. Yul is self-effacing and soft-spoken by nature. That's why he was quite a revelation as the defiant and angst-ridden Pepe Samson in the play. He really brought his character to life and how!

Even F Sionil Jose was impressed with Yul's performance. The esteemed writer told Yul that the role was perfect for him.

Set during the tumultuous years before Martial Law, "Mass" is the story of a thief, drug pusher, activist, *sacristan*, Bilibid boy and murderer who is, on top of all these, revolutionary. No longer able to withstand the hardships of provincial life, he escapes from his village in Pangasinan and flees to the slums of Tondo.

Pepe is disillusioned by what he sees around him in the city, and embarks on an adventurous journey. After his trek from one swampland to another, he finds life taking a surprise turn, like those stories of most Filipino youths who finally find meaning in their existence.

Yul really gave his all in "Mass." He takes his role seriously, and so during the entire run of the play, he won't be accepting any movie or TV assignments. "Stage is exhausting, but the discipline is good for actors. I'm learning a lot from the cast. At first I was intimidated because they were all professional stage actors. But they made me feel at ease. I just needed to pay attention *pag nag*-adlib *sila*, especially when *ka-eksena ko si* **Lou Veloso**. He's super! But sometimes I am startled to realize that what he's saying is not in the script."

It's the torture scene that Yul considers the most difficult part of the play but he pulled it off really well. His candid soliloquy after that scene elicited thunderous applause from the crowd.

The daring "*torohan*" scenes will make you feel like a voyeur. "Mass" is definitely not for boring people. You gotta have a burning passion for life itself to be able to relate with Pepe Samson's foray into the seamy side of things.

The remarkable cast members who portray multiple roles are seasoned thespians **Ronnie Lazaro, Bodjie Pascua, Madeleine Nicolas, Lou Veloso, Roeder Camanag, Kokoy Palma, Tess Jamias, Marjorie Ann Lorico, Johann de Guzman** and **Diana Malahay.**

"Mass" is directed by 2003 Aliw Best Stage Director **Chris Millado**. It runs till March 6, with matinee shows at 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, and evening shows at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. For ticket inquiries call 832-3661 or 832-1125, locals 1620 and 1621

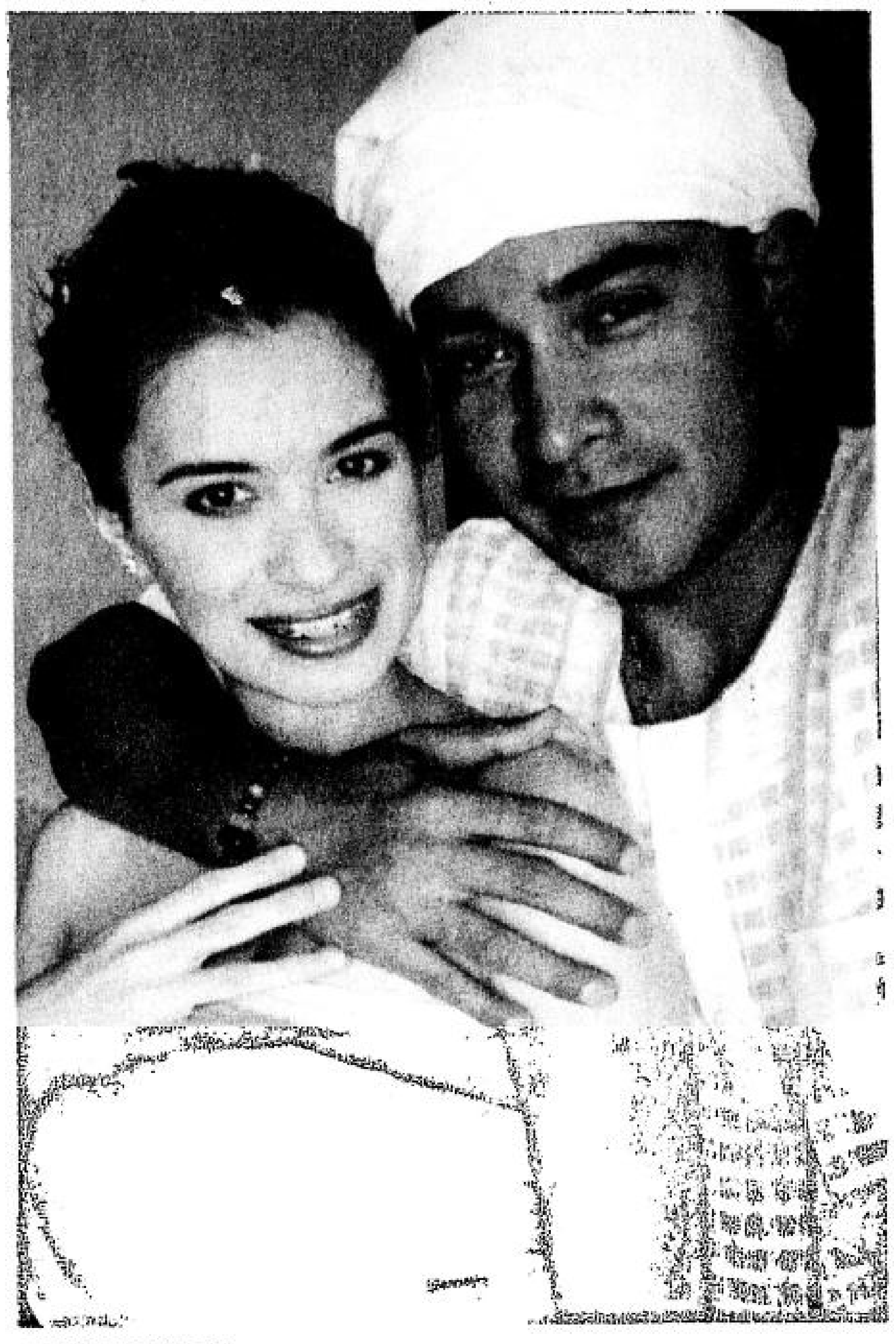
"TILL depths do them part"

Thank you, Louie!

I KNOW Louie will understand why I opted not to go to his wake. After my mom passed away, I would rather gaze up into the heavens than stare at caskets. I can almost hear my mom and Louie laughing as they reminisce about crazy show biz stories.

Thank you, Louie, for giving me the much needed push when I let other things get in the way of my deadline. Thank you, Louie, for the pat in the back when I got thrust into all sorts of controversies. Thank you, Louie, for letting me know the true joys of the written word. You will always be somewhere between my punctuation marks.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaith-band.com)



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aneshiro ("Turn Left Turn
Zhang Ziyi and ("2046,"

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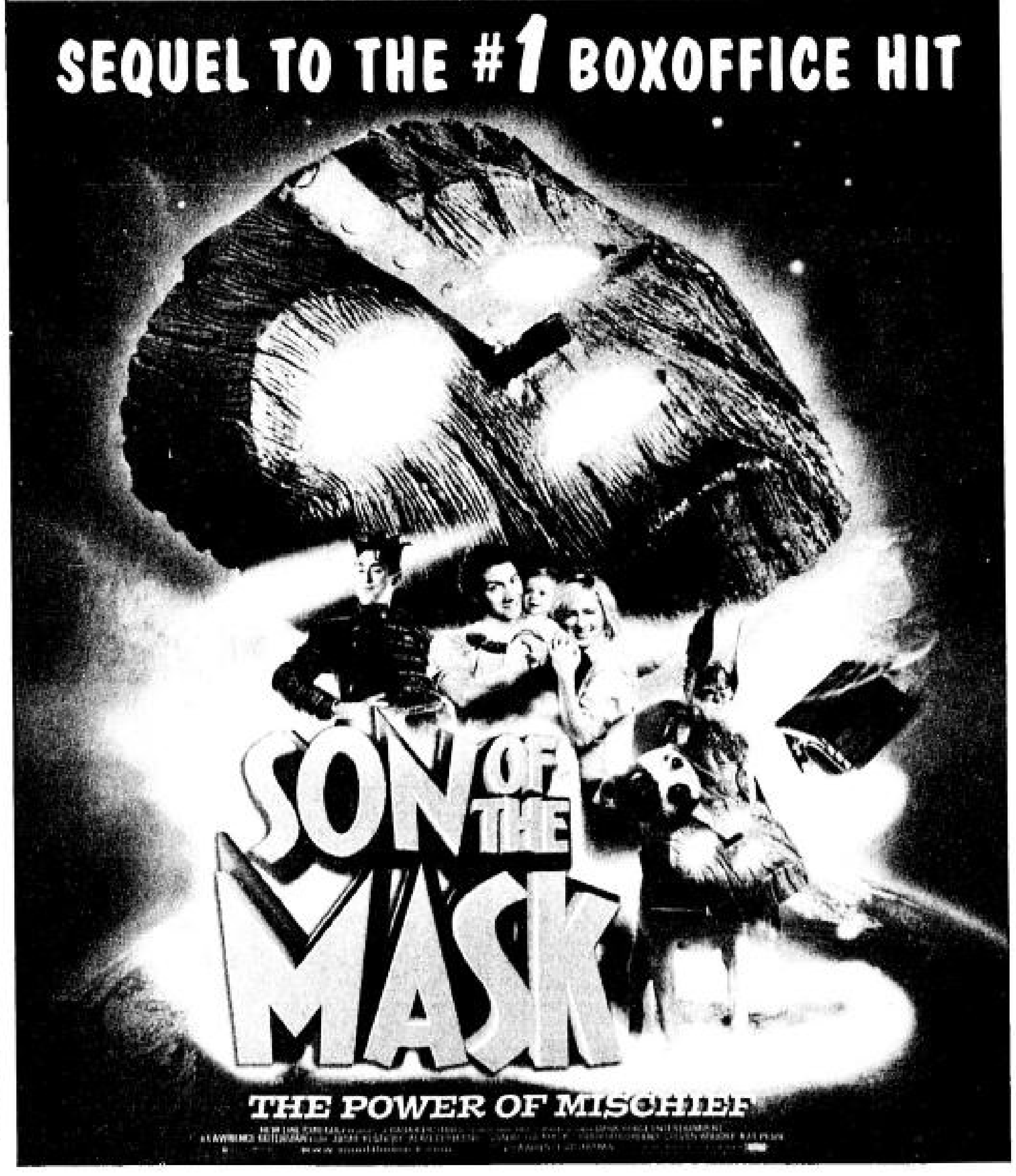

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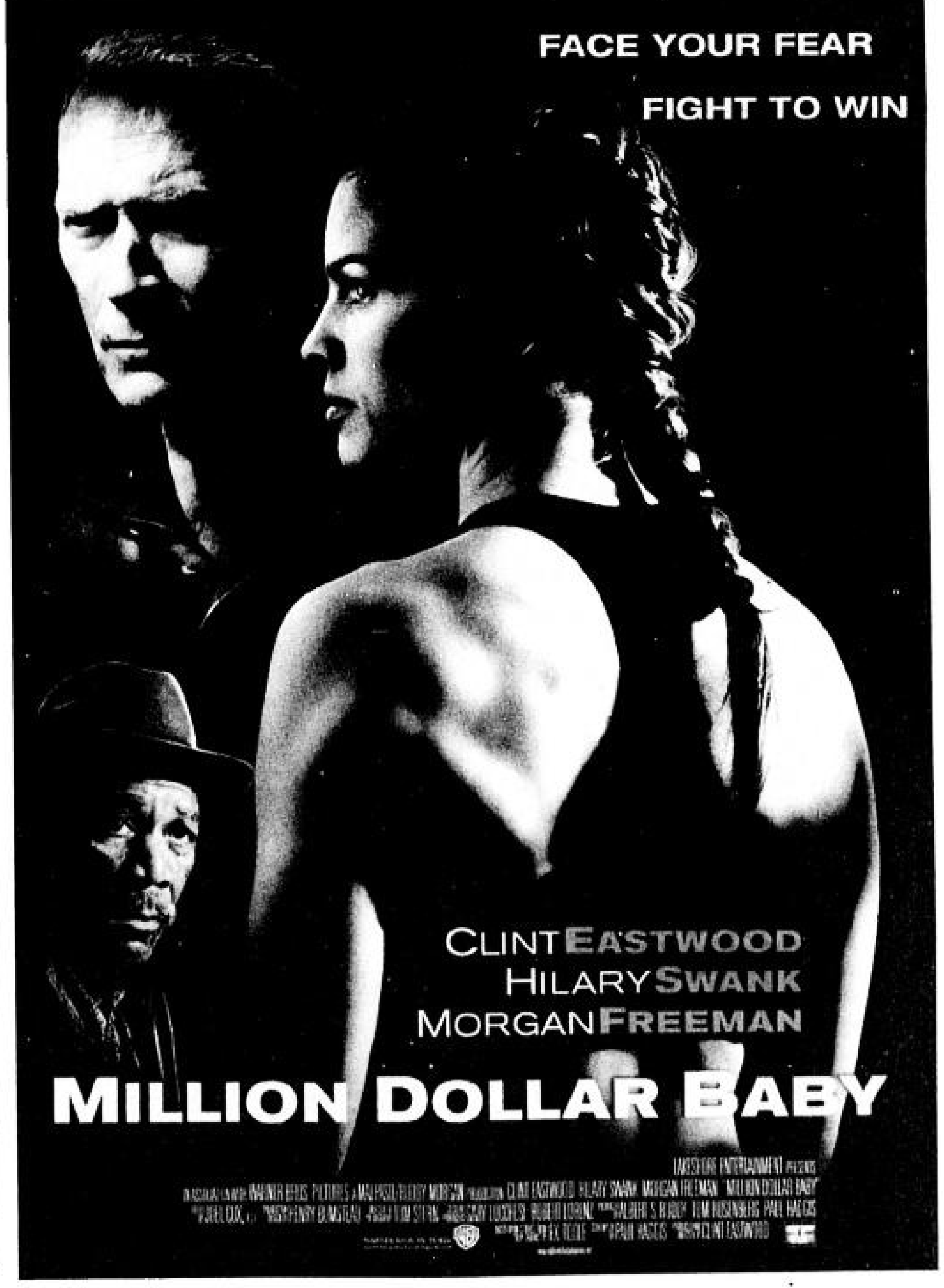

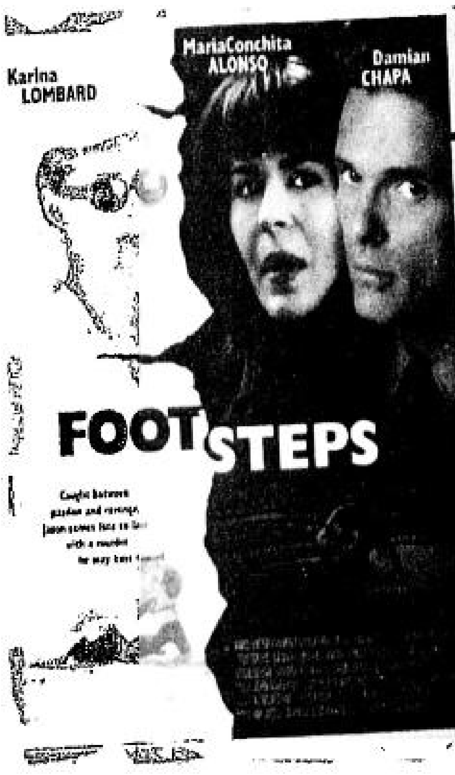

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SYNOPSIS:
JASON DAVIS, an adrenaline-junkie TV news reporter, falls for beautiful AMBER CARLEN. He receives a tip that a double murder is about to be commited. Estranged from his wife NANCY and eight tear-old daughter MAXIE, Jason need to re-prioritize his life. The murder victims turn out to be Juvenile Court Judge Stone and his wife. Deputy D.A. STEVE CARLEN is assigned to the case.
Jason connects Steven and Amber, and he publicly accuses Steve of harrasing him. The latter blames it all on Amber. Jason finds no information on her, but he finds a matching Amber Cardinelli, who had attempted to murder her brother. Jason breaks into her apartment where he finds evidence that Deputy D.A. Steve Carlen is the perpetrator. He races at Steve's in time to see Amber being sexually assaulted by her brother. The police and media arrive. It's a hot story, but Jason is on his way to be with his family.

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TRIBUTE TO
FERNANDO POE, JR.
MANUEL DE LEON

Premiere: Feb 24/Thu/6pm
BUNSO
Documentary by Ditsi Carolino

Premiere: Feb 25/Fri/6pm
DILIMAN
Digital Feature by Mes de Guzman

time	23 wed	24 thu	[illegible]	26 sat	27 [illegible]
10 am - 12:30 pm	MAGNIFICO	MAGNIFICO	MAGNIFICO	MAGNIFICO	MAGNIFICO
12:30 pm - 3 pm	BRITISH ANIMATION 1 for children	VALUES-ORIENTED SHORT FILMS	VALUES-ORIENTED SHORT FILMS	BRITISH ANIMATION 1 for children	REGIONAL FILM PROGRAM
		TRIBUTE TO FERNANDO POE, JR.			
3 pm - 6:30 pm		SANTIAGO	WALLS OF HELL	PERLAS NG SILANGAN	ANAK NG BULKAN
6 pm - 8 pm	[illegible]		INDIE WEEKEND		
6:30 pm - 9:30 pm	AGUILA	BUNSO	DILIMAN	NEW SHORT FILMS	TO BE ANNOUNCED
9:30 pm - 11 pm		BADJAO	ROMEO MUST ROCK	BRITISH ANIMATION 2 for adults	ECZ LUV

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'Harana' with a twist, Spirit of '67

"TANGING Ikaw: Kakaibang Pagtanghal ng Pag-Ibig," showcasing classic Filipino love songs in the era of the 'harana' (serenade), goes onstage tomorrow at the Crossroad 77 Convenarium.

SHOW TIME

Produced by Creative Futures, the dinner concert will have a repeat on March 10 at the Onstage Theater in Greenbelt 1.

Featured performers are Robert Seña, Isay Alvarez, J.M. Rodriguez, Pam G and the Philippine Madrigal Singers.

The show will also feature well-loved folk dances such as the Subli, Sayaw sa Bangko and Tinikling, as performed by the Kaisahan ng Lahi Dance Ensemble (former members of the Bayanihan Dance Troupe). The Kultur Klub Kids will perform a street dance.

Tomorrow's show starts at 6 p.m., the March 10 repeat at 7 p.m.

Crossroad 77 Convenarium is on Mother Ignacia corner Sct. Reyes St., Quezon City. Tickets are available at the gate.

Weekends at Suburbia

At Suburbia Bar tonight, Nyoy Volante and Mannos performs back-to-back with party band Freeverse tonight.

Wiseguys is the featured band tomorrow, along with Paolo Santos.

Call 450-1685 or 811-0725, or email at xaxmusic@hotmail.com.

Spirit of '67

Catch the retro group Spirit of '67, 8 p.m tonight at 826 Dance Hall and Theatre Lounge on Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road) in Makati City.

For reservations, call 844-6753.

Fire Dance

The Fire Dance Cirque performs at Araneta Coliseum until Feb. 27, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are available at ALV Events International (633-98-25 to 27) and all TicketNet outlets (911-5555).

JM Rodriguez and Pam G (standing), Isay Alvarez and Rober Seña

Norah Jones in Manila

Grammy winner Norah Jones is due in Manila for a one-night-only concert on March 12 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Globe Platinum subscribers get a 20 percent discount on ticket prices. New subscribers who will avail of Globe Platinum plans until Feb. 28 will get a chance to win VIP tickets to the concert.

NORAH JONES

Kristo

Richard Signey plays Christ again in repeats of the *senaculo* from March 21-26.

Signey is joined by Alma Concepcion, who returns as Mary Magdalene, Ivy Violan as the Virgin Mary, Ricky Davao and Yul Servo alternate as Pontius Pilate, broadcaster Candace Giron is Veronica, and Bodjie Pascua is John the Baptist.

The production will be at Plaza Hugo in Sta. Ana on Holy Wednesday, San Juan Plaza, on Holy Thursday, Greenbelt 3 Fountain Area on Black Saturday. For inquiries, call 589-6190, (0917) 997-4788, 721-0801, or (0917) 899-1835.

Simple Plan

Two big Canadian acts are coming to Manila for a show together: Avril Lavigne and the band Simple Plan (Pierre Bouvier, Chuck Comeau, David Desrosieres, Sebastian Lefebvre and Jeff Stinco). The one-night-only concert is set March 31, 8 p.m., at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field, Taguig. For details, call 891-9999 or 687-1125.

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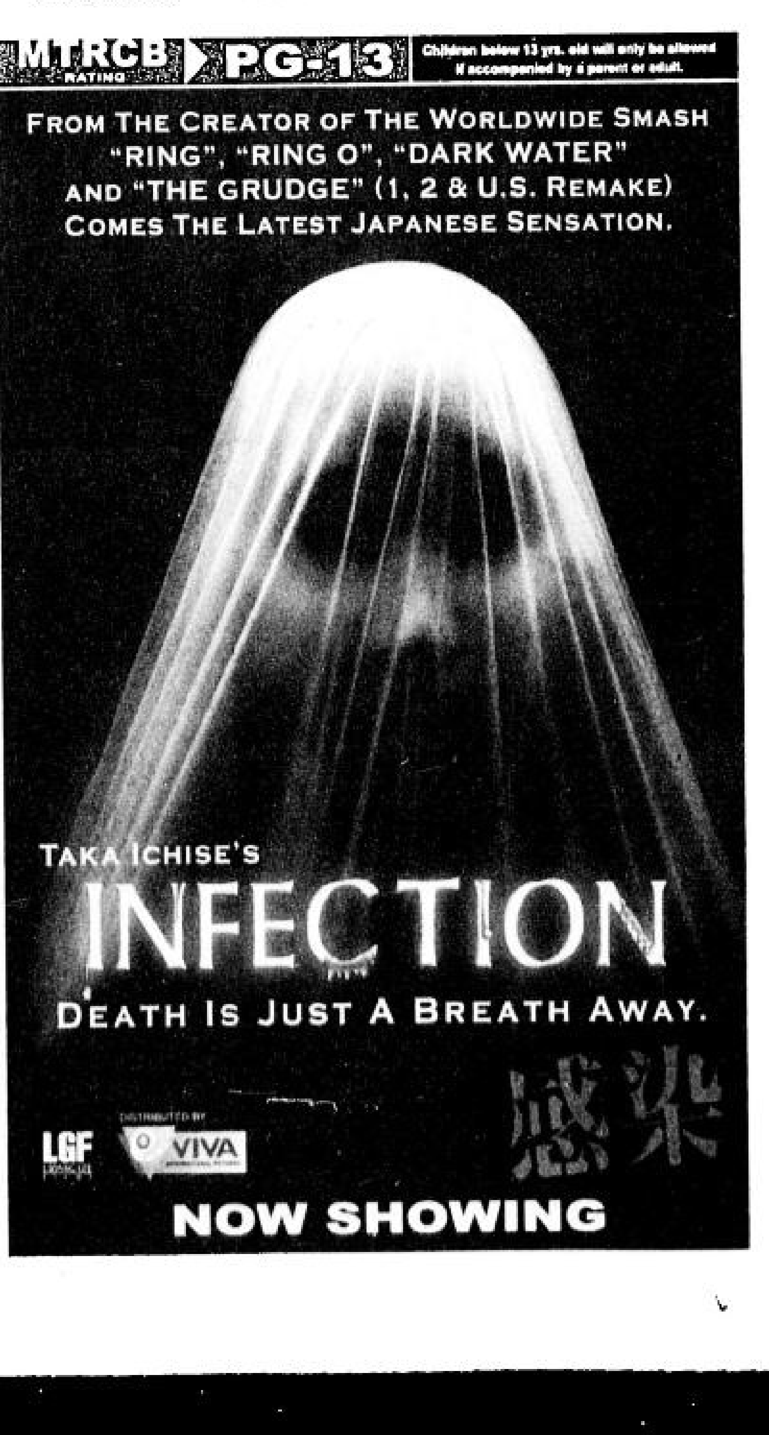
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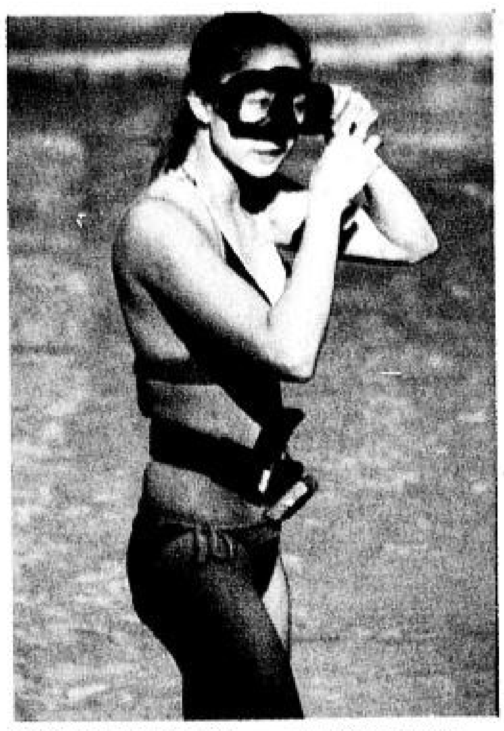

MICHELLE NOCON prepares for a water challenge.

Pinoys define 'extreme'

By Armin Adina

ASIAN viewers are currently witnessing exactly how tough Filipinos are on "Enervon AXN Extreme," whose delayed telecast premiered on Thursday.

The program is the country's first major extreme stunt television production. "AXN Extreme" has already challenged adventurers from India, Pakistan, Taiwan and Malaysia. In the Philippines, Enervon helped AXN TV gather 10 of the toughest men and women for the landmark reality show.

The participants struggled to outdo each other in a series of unique challenges, including catching piglets in a mud-filled pen, and navigating an obstacle course on a mini-bike.

Among the male contenders was Batangas board member Marc Leviste, who considers extreme adventure "my cup of tea." Fellow contestant and model Geoff Rodriguez considers Marc his "extreme challenge hero."

Fabian Mangahas enjoyed the experience. "I will join the next one," the 24-year-old student declared. Another student, Jimmy Hendra, said he participated "in order to inspire people to get out of their comfort zones and do something fun."

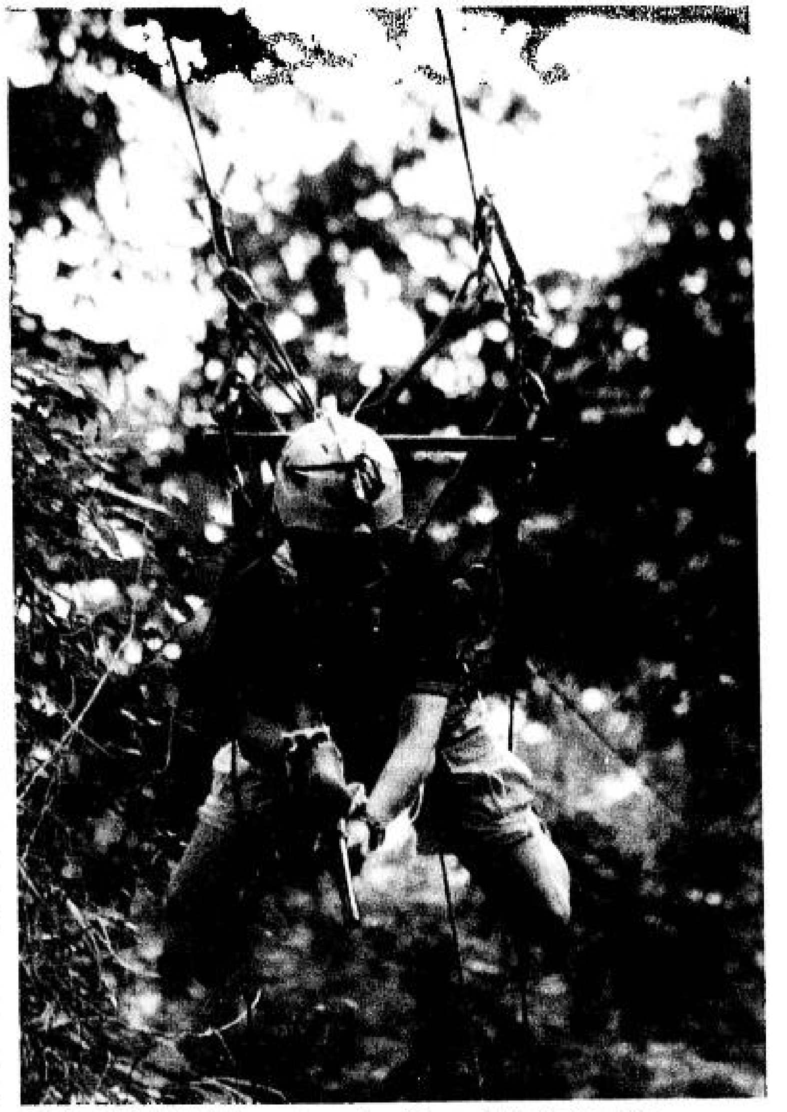
Migrant Chinese Gong Shu Xian, dubbed by fellow challengers as the country's answer to William Hung, provided comic relief.

The female challengers were a diverse batch as well. Michelle Nocon is a statuesque nurse. This dainty-looking Miss Philippines America of 1997 plays American football, boxing, snow boarding and soccer. Chinese school teacher Jolly Chinguanco came in with tattoo artist Monick Enriquez. Anne Luverne Olandez is an independent single woman, and Cookie Lee is a proud mother of two.

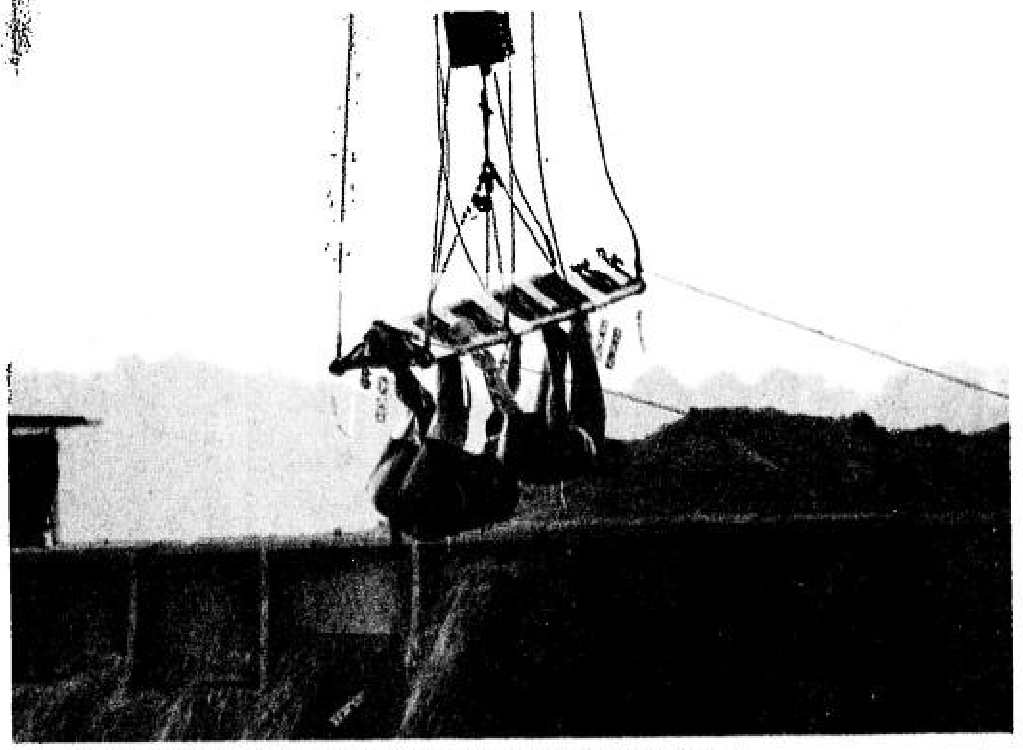
The male and female grand prize winners each received P100,000.

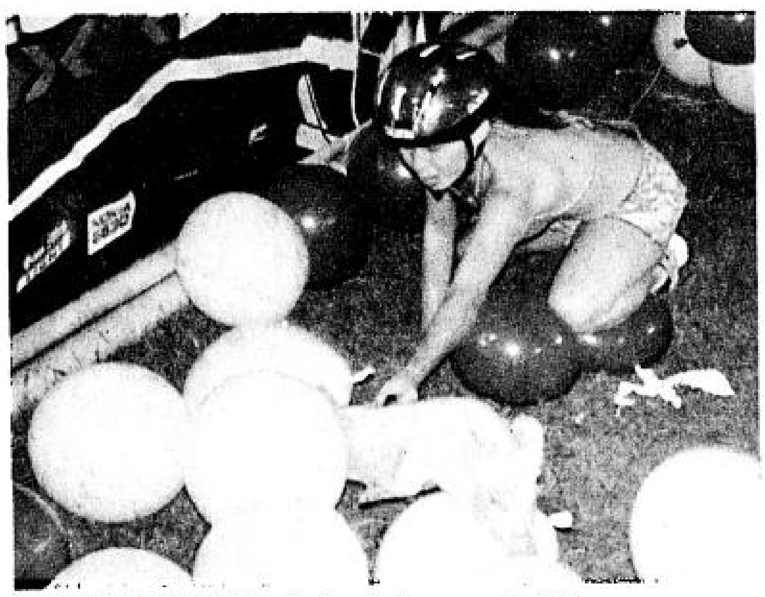
Thursday's telecast featured the male contestants. The all-female episode will be aired on March 3, and the hour-long final episode featuring the top four contenders airs on March 8.

GEOFF RODRIGUEZ in the mini-bike obstable course


GONG SHU XIAN shoots targets with a paintball gun while suspended in air .

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH AGCAOILI


MARC LEVISTE and Michelle Nocon hang from a monkey bar frame.


JOLLY CHINGUANCO tries to catch a greased piglet.

Real, but not entirely accurate

By Joyce C. Abaño

THE SIXTH installment of the two-time Emmy award-winning reality show on television, CBS' "The Amazing Race," was concluded two weeks ago in Chicago, Illinois, where it started.

The show ended with three finalists in a final sprint at Chicago's Ping Tom Memorial Park in the Chinatown section.

Engaged couple Freddy Holliday, 34, and Kendra Bentley, 25, emerged as winners of one of the most exciting and daring reality shows on television, defeating dating couple Kris Perkins and Jon Buehler. Ex-couple Adam Cardon and Rebecca Malis finished in third place.

For this season, 11 teams of two participants each covered four continents, 24 cities and 40,000 miles in a race around the world to win the $1-million prize.

The race actually ended in September last year. Models Holliday and Bentley told INQUIRER Entertainment in a teleconference hosted by AXN Asia how difficult it was to keep the results a secret for five months.

"It was hard," the two agreed. "We didn't tell our family, we didn't tell a single friend."

According to the couple, who are both living in Miami, Florida, not everything shown on TV was accurate.

"Some conversations were definitely taken out of context," said Kendra, who is originally from Hickory, North Carolina. "Freddy and I had this conversation about the corrupt government in Senegal, I said it was unfortunate and very sad and depressing to see ... so many people living in poverty, seeing them suffer... you know, because there wasn't any opportunity to educate them about birth control. I said it was unfortunate because they kept breeding... and the poverty, it was very hard for me to see uneducated people suffering. I was expressing my anger toward the government, and they made it sound like I was being insensitive to the feelings of the people —which couldn't be farther from the truth," she added.

The race gave the couple new points of view about the countries they visited.

"China was great. It was such a unique opportunity for us to be there and be a part of something that has so much history," said Freddy, who hails from Charleston, West Virginia. "Shanghai has one of the most visually stimulating environments we've ever been to ... and we liked Iceland."

The couple said the race also brought them closer, and further sealed their relationship. "All those challenges and being able to overcome them together... depending only on each other throughout the whole race, just made our love a lot stronger," said Kendra, an aviation enthusiast.

Freddy added: "I admire Kendra more than ever. She was just an amazing teammate throughout the entire race. She was always there to pick me up when I was feeling my worst and I tried to do the same for her."

Kendra said the race also taught her to face her fears.

"One of the most difficult [stunts] for me was scaling down the 40-story building in Shanghai," she said. "I have a great fear of heights, but I had to do it. That was a really scary one for me."

The couple are planning on getting married in May. They said their winnings were not likely to change their lifestyle all that much.

"[The money is] going to be invested," Freddy revealed. We have a wedding coordinator to plan for us and do the arrangements, and most of it has already been taken care of. We'll try and turn our $1 million into $10 million, I guess. We'll see how long that takes us."

He added that, since they're already involved in real estate, they would probably make similar investments.

"We also have several charities that we're involved in," Freddy added. "There's one, the Joe DiMaggio children's hospital here... we've been working with them for a while. We've also produced some calendars that you can find in our website at www.holliday-bentley.com."

Kendra said future couple participants have much to consider before joining the race.

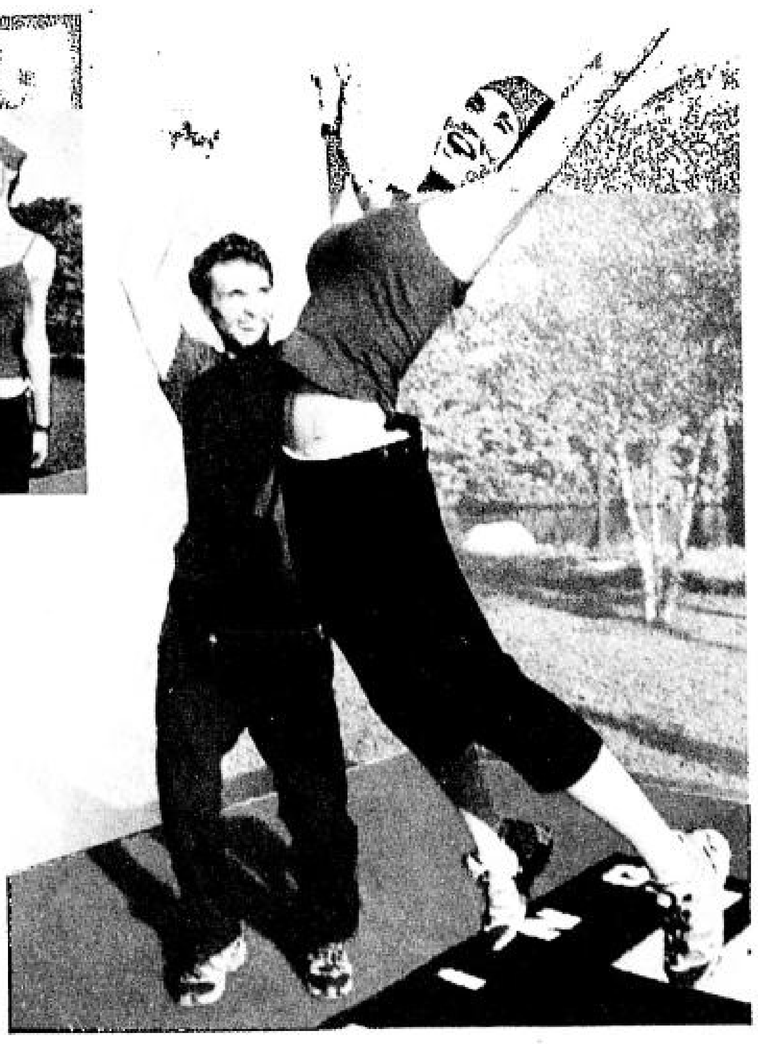
"Make sure that your relationship is very solid before you join," she said. "Our winning was a combination of pure luck and staying focused and working together, which we did extremely well."

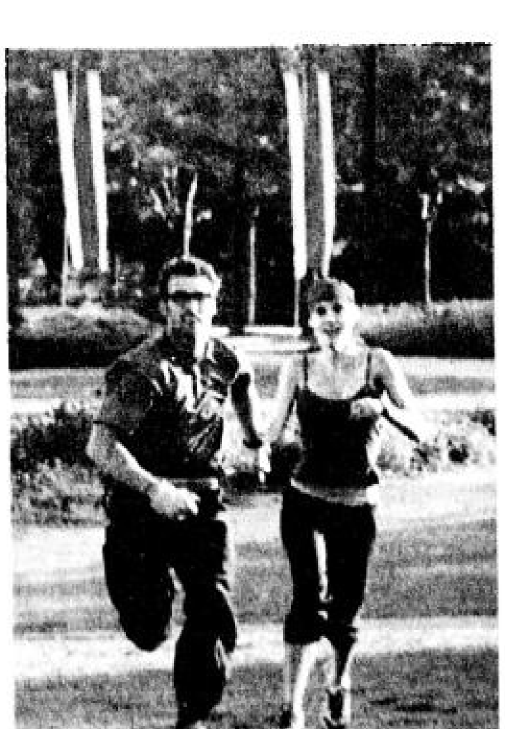
(The two-hour premier telecast of "The Amazing Race," seventh season airs on March 2 at 10 p.m. on AXN. Regular broadcast from thereon is at 8 p.m. Wednesdays. Watch out for the much-talked about participation of "Survivor: All Star" couple Amber Brkich and Rob Mariano.)

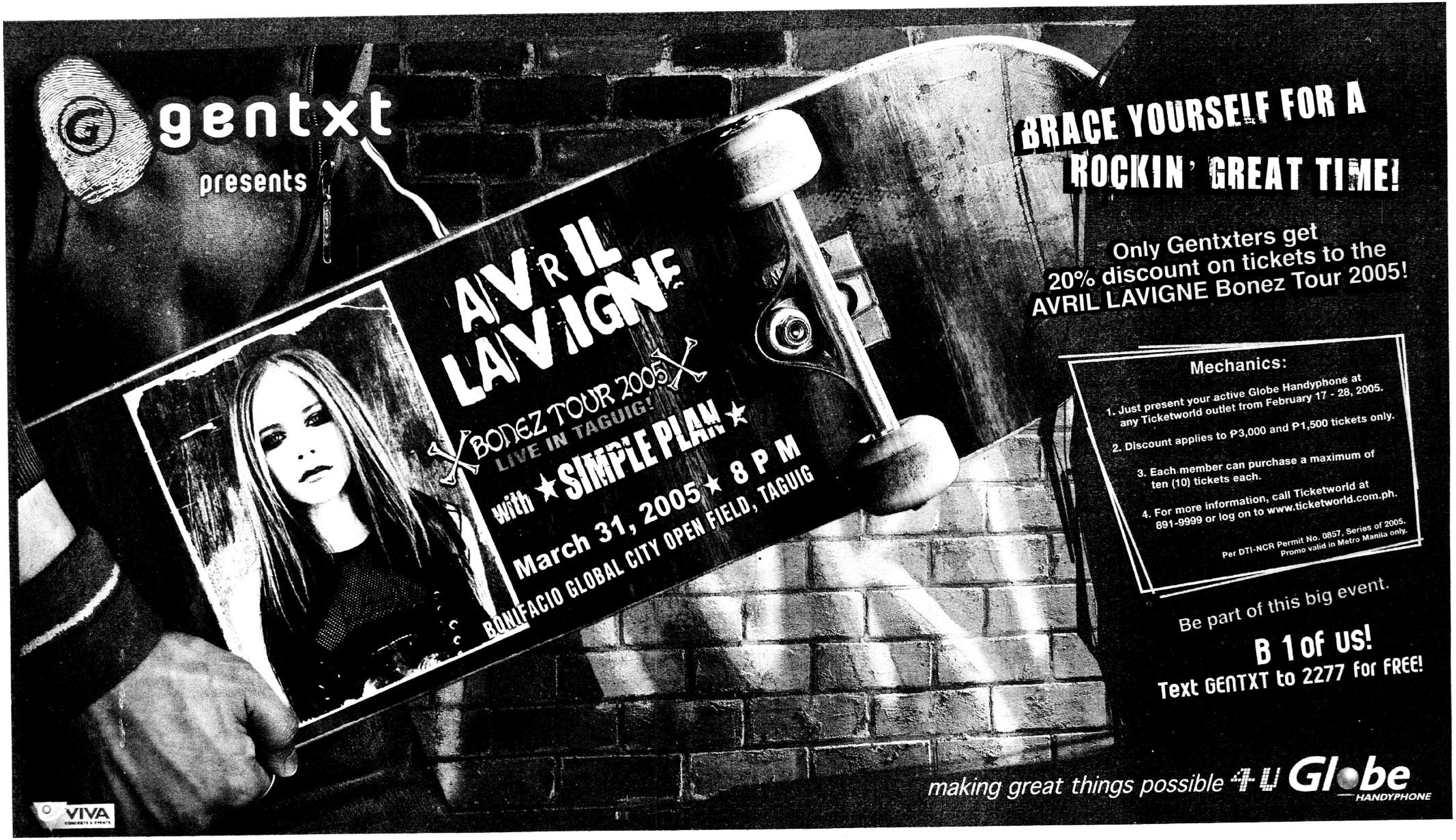
CONTENDERS Adam Cardon and Rebecca Malis, ex-couple, third placers

JON BUEHLER and Kris Perkins, dating couple, second placers. Freddy and Kendra's advice: "Stay tight."

THE CHAMPS, with host Phil Keoghan


JUMP FOR JOY
Freddy Holliday and Kendra Bentley


SPRINT TO THE FINISH. Their reward, $1 million each—just in time for a spring wedding



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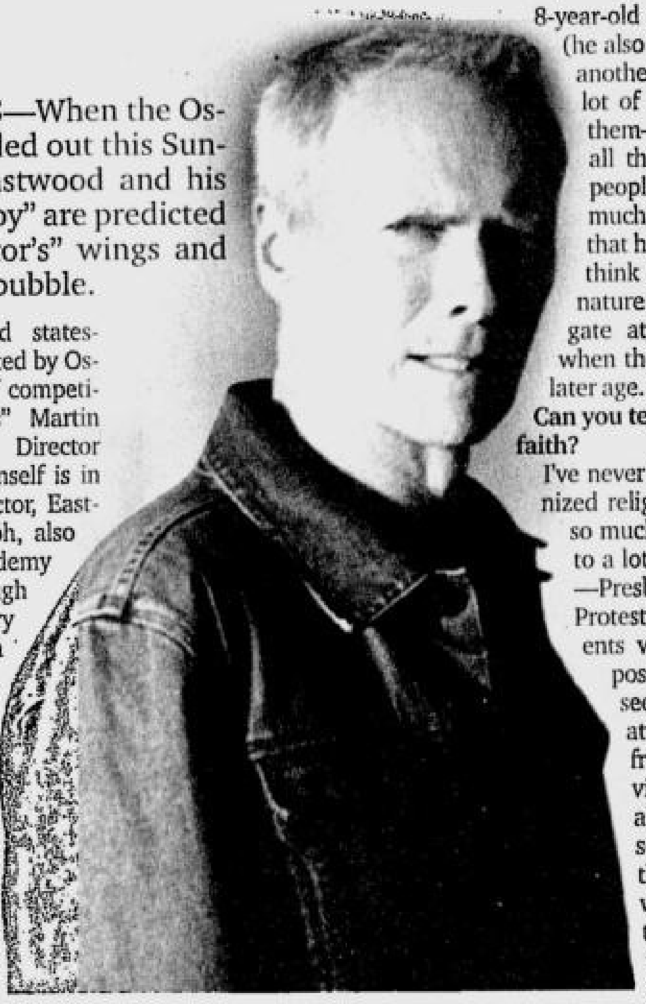
Will Oscar make his day again?

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—When the Oscars are handed out this Sunday, Clint Eastwood and his "Million Dollar Baby" are predicted to clip "The Aviator's" wings and burst "Sideways'" bubble.

Eastwood, Hollywood statesman at 74, is also predicted by Oscar pundits to pose stiff competition to "The Aviator's" Martin Scorsese for the Best Director award. Although he himself is in the running for Best Actor, Eastwood will likely triumph, also according to Film Academy prognosticators, through his direction of Hilary Swank and Morgan Freeman, who are up for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actor honors.


CLINT EASTWOOD, Hollywood statesman

With his latest movie, Eastwood has a chance to duplicate his Oscar Best Picture and Best Director victory in 1992 for "Unforgiven."

On this particularly windy, chilly morning at the Warner Bros. lot in Burbank, not far from the bungalow which houses Malpaso, his own production company, Eastwood walks in as we are interviewing Freeman. "Hey boss, how are you?" Freeman says, eliciting a smile and a salute from Eastwood. The actor-director, in a golf shirt, brown jacket and khaki pants, is grizzled and gray but that quiet dignity he projects onscreen is evident even in person.

When he sits down for his turn to be interviewed by our group, he puts on his glasses (which he takes off when he poses for snapshots later) and nurses a cup of tea, occasionally wiping his nose with tissue paper. He speaks in that famous whisper.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

You seem to be getting better at what you do as you grow older. Your thoughts on this?

There's no reason why a person shouldn't get better as he gets older. You get more experience, you have more life behind you from which to reflect on in motion pictures. A lot of times at a certain age, the directors will maybe lose touch, but I think the thing that's worked for me is just trying to always do something different and not relying, falling back, on doing the same thing that I was doing 30 or 40 years ago. I keep working instead of retiring because there's always something to learn from every movie [and] everybody. That's just part of life, and until I slip into a senility of some sort, I hope to continue doing it.

You had to fight to get where you are now. Do you feel that you're still fighting?

I'm just trying to maintain the old steam somewhere. I try to think back to when I was a young player in the early '50s, trying to get a job as an actor and knocking on doors and half the people tell you that you weren't enough of this or you weren't enough of that or you're too much of this or too much of that. You have to be able to forge yourself forward and that's why I tell young people who want to take up acting, you have to really want to do it ... badly.

What attitude have you adopted to keep yourself in the game all these years?

I just enjoy what I'm doing and always try to have a positive attitude—you can't get anywhere with a negative attitude. I try to look back and think what drove me when I was 25 years old to want to be an actor when so many people shook cigars in my face and said that I was a bum and there was some little voice in there saying well, let's not worry about that, let's just move onward and upward until something clicks in.

Critics say that your performance here is your "most emotionally overwhelming achievement." What attracted you to this project?

Al Ruddy gave me a copy of "Rope Burns," a book of short stories, several years ago and told me that some of the stories were very interesting, especially this one, "Million Dollar Baby." I read it and liked it. Then he brought me a script. I was interested in doing it because it was a different kind of story ... about a person wrestling with his own life, disappointments, and relationship with his daughter and wife. I think that was appealing to me as an actor ... and it's easier [for me] to play it at this stage. Also, it's not an older man/younger girl romantic story. It's a father-daughter story.

Do you think women make good boxers?

I tell you, yes. Laila Ali is certainly doing very well and Lucia Rijker, of course—she's really good. She is the real deal.

Is there a different set of rules in female boxing and how do they protect certain parts of their bodies?

They have a bra that's made special. The girls will say hey, punch me there and nobody's going to do that (laughs). But it'll take a tremendous hit. They protect themselves just as men protect themselves in boxing and you have to allow for that and be prepared. But there are no different rules.

Were you able to do something for your own mom like Hilary's character did for hers?

Yes. My mother fortunately is still alive. She's 96. I took her to the Oscar show last year. She's had a lot of fun with my career and it's been a great joy to me to be able to share that with her and pay her back for all the discomfort and misery I might have caused her somewhere along the way. I just took her on a vacation. She gave up a lot to bring up my sister and me, so I'm just lucky to have the chance to do that. I didn't have that [chance] with my father because he died fairly young.

Was Hilary Swank the only actress considered for the role of Maggie?

Another actress had been suggested when I first read the book, but Al Ruddy said Hilary Swank had expressed interest in it. I always liked her very much and I said yeah. I wanted to meet her, though, to see what shape she was in, physically. I thought she was a terrific actress and so we put her on a program to exercise. She trained for four months, four hours a day religiously. She boxed for two hours every night and I put her with a friend of mine, Grant Roberts, who's a professional weightlifter, to put some more muscle on her and she never looked back. She just went straight ahead and trained like a professional. All the trainers were amazed at how well she did in that short a time. She could have outboxed a lot of women who were in there doing it for a living.

Can you talk about your relationship with your own daughters?

Well, I have enough of them to talk about that (laughs). I have an 8-year-old and an 11-year-old (he also has one aged 40 and another aged 32). I spend a lot of time even now with them—school events and all that sort of thing that people do when they're much younger. But maybe that helps keep me young. I think that the sad trick of nature is that people propagate at a rather early age when they really enjoy it at a later age. I really enjoy kids.

Can you tell us about your own faith?

I've never belonged to an organized religion. I moved around so much as a child, so I went to a lot of different churches—Presbyterian, Methodist, Protestant—because my parents wanted me to be exposed to religion, just to see if I took to them. I've attended mass with friends at Catholic services. I think the spiritual life is within the person—whatever it takes them to get there, whether it's looking at the Grand Canyon or whether it's being in a church of their faith [is all right].

Your characters are often reticent and hardly utter terms of endearment. How often do you tell people you care about that you love them, and what do you say?

My darling, my blood (laughs). That's another thing with [growing old]. You become more appreciative of people and relationships, and you figured maybe you'd hate to overlook any opportunity to tell somebody how you feel.

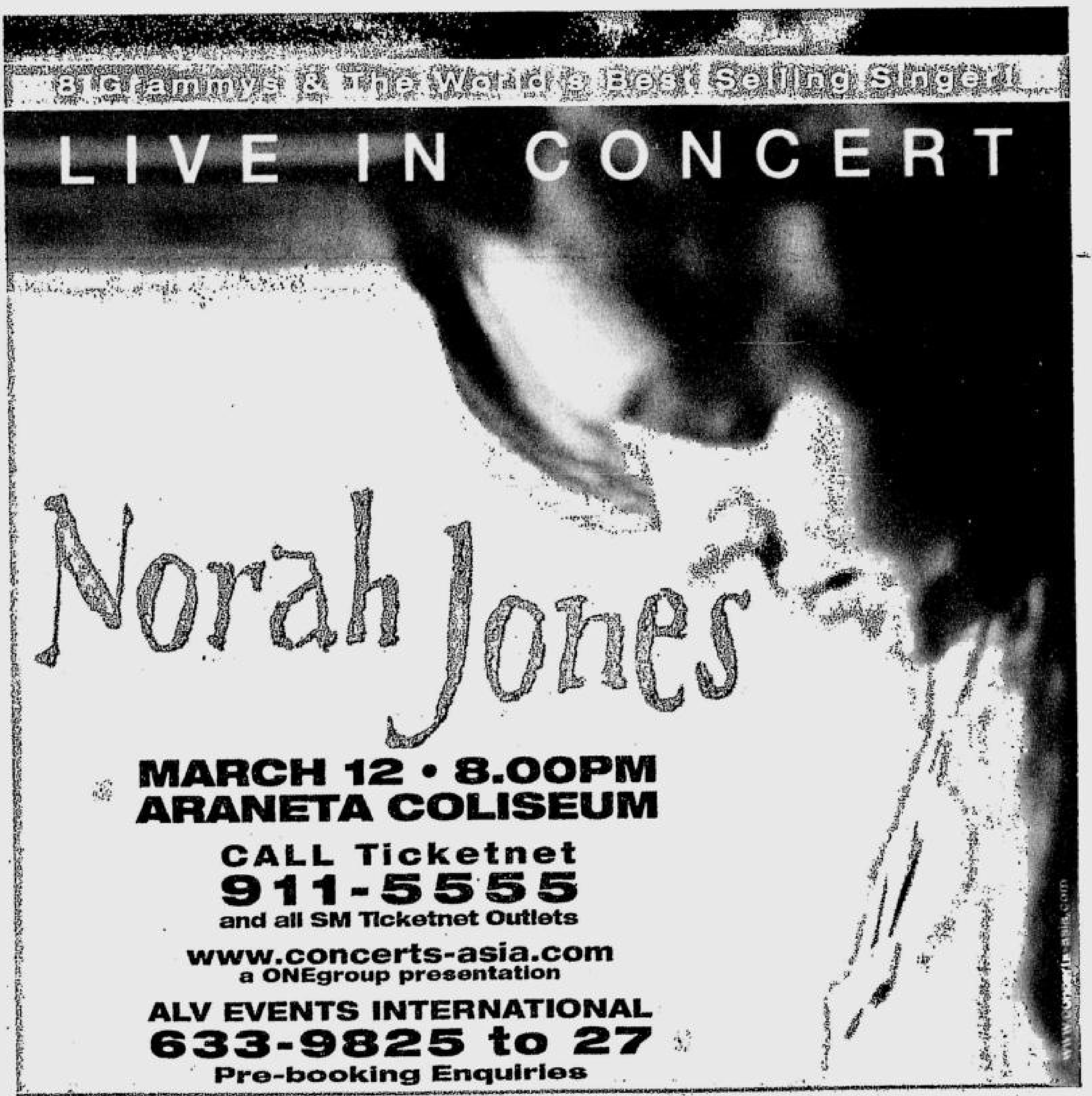
Do you find that you become more expressive as you get older?

Yes. I've always been somewhat on the reserve side so maybe I say less. It's important to say it while people are alive rather than to regret it. We've all lost people in our life, whether it's a parent or a relative. All of us have probably wished we had said something more to them. I remember going through a terrible guilt period when my father died. I wished I'd asked him to play golf more often ... or said, "Let's hang out" or, "I love you," or whatever.

What's up next?

The next movie I am doing is about some soldiers in World War II, based on the book, "Flags of Our Fathers," a bestseller some years back. It's an ambitious project. Let's see if I have the stamina to get it there.

>>> entertainment
this week
LIVE
STAR RECORDS
presents
April Boy Regino
ALPHA
presents
RETROSPECT
SM SOUTHMALL
LAS PIÑAS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globe girlfriends
BLAZE
SKECHERS
AMA Computer University
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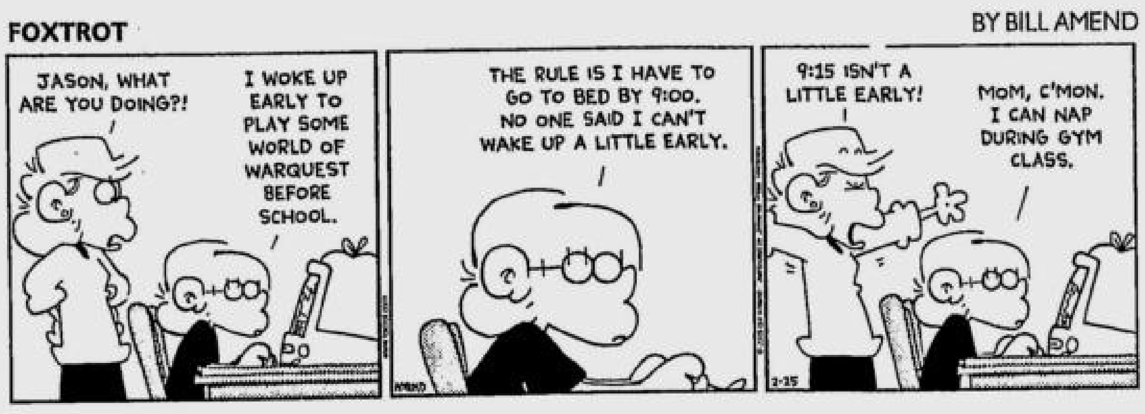
COMIC Relief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2005

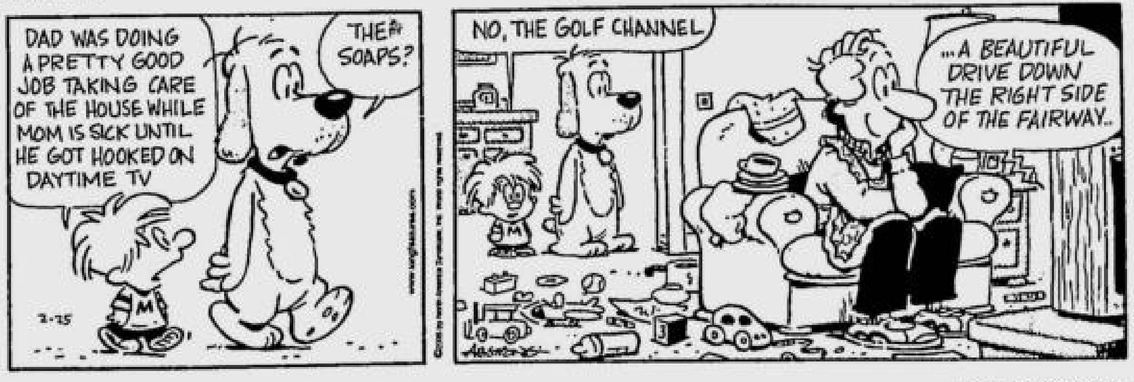
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


JASON, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I WOKE UP EARLY TO PLAY SOME WORLD OF WARQUEST BEFORE SCHOOL.
THE RULE IS I HAVE TO GO TO BED BY 9:00. NO ONE SAID I CAN'T WAKE UP A LITTLE EARLY.
9:15 ISN'T A LITTLE EARLY!
MOM, C'MON. I CAN NAP DURING GYM CLASS.
2-25

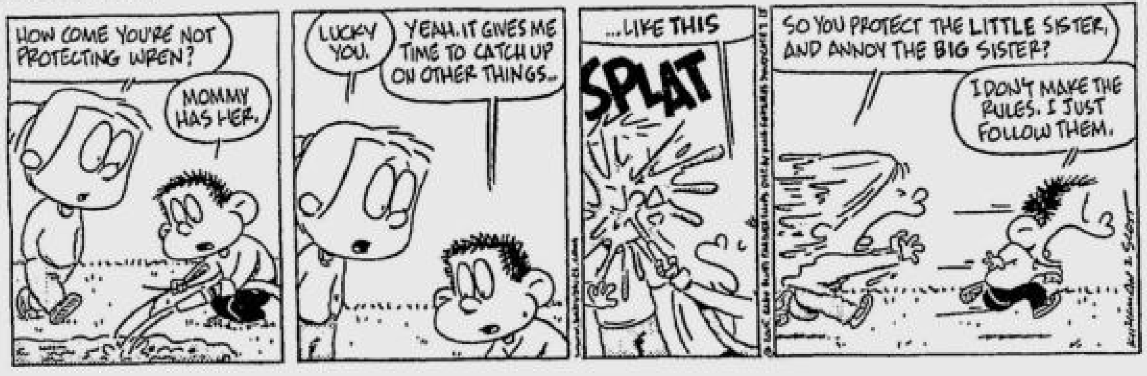
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


DAD WAS DOING A PRETTY GOOD JOB TAKING CARE OF THE HOUSE WHILE MOM IS SICK UNTIL HE GOT HOOKED ON DAYTIME TV
THE SOAPS?
NO, THE GOLF CHANNEL
...A BEAUTIFUL DRIVE DOWN THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE FAIRWAY..
2-25

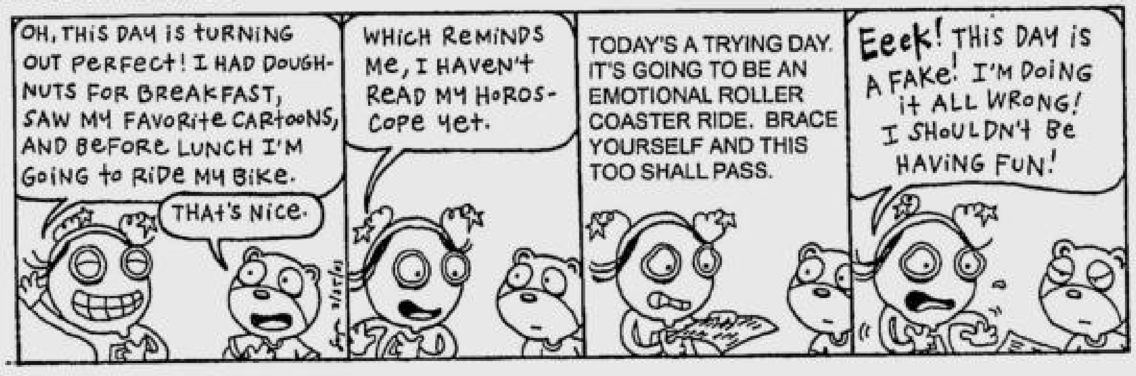
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW COME YOU'RE NOT PROTECTING WREN?
MOMMY HAS HER.
LUCKY YOU.
YEAH. IT GIVES ME TIME TO CATCH UP ON OTHER THINGS..
...LIKE THIS
SPLAT
SO YOU PROTECT THE LITTLE SISTER, AND ANNOY THE BIG SISTER?
I DON'T MAKE THE RULES. I JUST FOLLOW THEM.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


OH, THIS DAY IS TURNING OUT PERFECT! I HAD DOUGHNUTS FOR BREAKFAST, SAW MY FAVORITE CARTOONS, AND BEFORE LUNCH I'M GOING TO RIDE MY BIKE.
THAT'S NICE.
WHICH REMINDS ME, I HAVEN'T READ MY HOROSCOPE YET.
TODAY'S A TRYING DAY. IT'S GOING TO BE AN EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER RIDE. BRACE YOURSELF AND THIS TOO SHALL PASS.
EEEK! THIS DAY IS A FAKE! I'M DOING IT ALL WRONG! I SHOULDN'T BE HAVING FUN!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are trustworthy, reliable and faithful. This makes you precious to your friends. They value your devotion. Personally, you're very strong, and you're an independent thinker! Later in life, you look for worthy causes. You are regal but never petty. Expect increased solitude in the year ahead in order to learn something important.
Birthdate of: Sean Astin, actor; Zeppo Marx, comic actor; Sally Jessy Raphael, TV talk-show host.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): There are still loose ends to tie up about home or where you live. Do whatever you can. Later this year, your interest shifts elsewhere.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Many of you will change your residence or your job this year. You're wrapping up a cycle you started in 1999. (What you need to do now is figure out where you're going to live.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your work conditions might be changing now. Basically, you're trying to figure out what really matters in life. horse.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have survived a difficult time of several years now. You're in the clear. Because of this, your relationships will improve enormously! (Lucky you.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Continue to go through your possessions, your clothing and your furnishings in order to throw away, give away and sell what you don't need. You have to streamline your life.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can certainly look forward to the prospects of earning you do, somehow your assets will increase. (You'll probably spend more as well!)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Because lucky Jupiter is in your sign this year, you are especially favored! You feel happier; and indeed you are luckier! It's OK to hope for the best.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's important for your sign to work hard now because a lovely career peak is right within your grasp. Very soon, all kinds of opportunities will open up for you. You're on a roll!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your popularity rating is very strong this year. Expect to meet new faces and make new friends. Don't hesitate to join groups and organizations. Everyone loves you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your career looks fabulous this year. Lucky Jupiter is at the top of your chart. Something promotes your reputation among your peers.

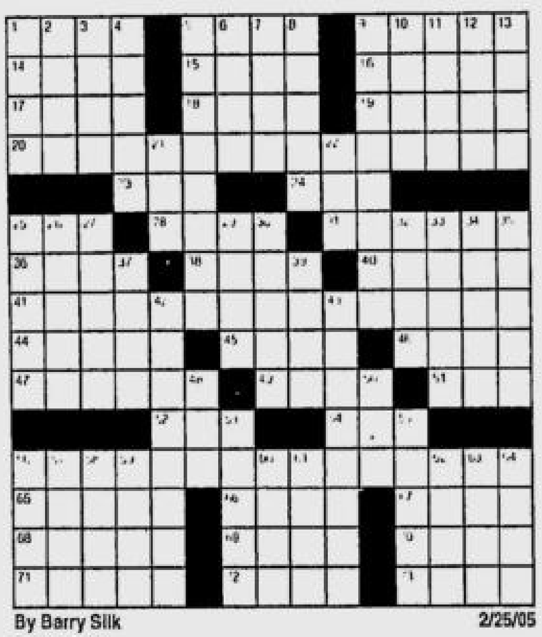
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Opportunities to travel as well as opportunities to promote your education will delight you this year. You see now that all your recent hard work is paying off.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Three planets are now in your sign. You feel strong, confident and quite independent. People are surprised at your assertiveness.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Waste catcher
5 Isle of exile
9 Nestling pigeon
14 Navajo's neighbor
15 Roman baker's dozen?
16 Distinctive atmospheres
17 NYSE alternative
18 Bosc or Anjou
19 Crownlet
20 Bargain site
23 PC linkup
24 Camera letters
25 __ of roses
28 Private dining room?
31 Directionless
36 Psych final?
38 __ contendere
40 Target sighter
41 Connie Francis hit
44 Within the rules
45 Olfactory stimulator
46 Jane Austen heroine
47 Decelerated
49 "Prince of Egypt" character
51 Use a sofa
52 Lettuce variety
54 Short jaunt
56 Exercise authority
65 Sadat of Egypt
66 Landlocked African nation
67 Geometric calculation
68 Swedish automaker
69 Tex-Mex choice
70 Connection
71 Ruhr Valley city
72 Hades river
73 Parcel (out)

DOWN
1 Annual melt
2 Fellini film
3 Simon Says player
4 Video image unit
5 Power notation
6 In __ of
7 Skewed view
8 Buenos __
9 "__ Night Fever"
10 Give up
11 River to the Caspian Sea
12 Bern's river
13 Exhausted
21 Cured meat
22 Cup ending?
25 Soup servings
26 Mrs. Fred Mertz
27 Muralist Rivera
29 Manhattan neighborhood
30 Iditarod rides
32 Stand
33 Muslim holy men
34 Physicist Enrico
35 Pick up the tab
37 Crop of a bird
39 A woodwind
42 Minute particle
43 Conventional
48 Homer's exclamation
50 Promissory note
53 Religious factions
55 Sacred poem
56 Silent greeting
57 Eve's grandson
58 Leather punches
59 Talk wildly
60 One of those
61 Risque
62 Buffalo's lake
63 Monopoly payment
64 Rice drink



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

2/25/05

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

T	B	A	R	■	I	R	O	N	■	A	R	I	S	E
H	A	R	E	■	N	O	L	O	■	S	E	D	E	R
A	L	E	C	■	D	O	L	E	■	S	T	E	R	N
I	M	A	Y	N	O	T	A	L	W	A	Y	S	B	E
■	■	■	C	O	O	S	■	■	H	I	P	■	■	■
W	H	A	L	E	R	■	R	E	E	L	E	C	T	S
H	O	N	E	S	■	H	O	T	A	S	■	H	I	T
I	R	I	S	■	R	I	G	H	T	■	S	E	T	A
P	S	T	■	C	E	D	E	S	■	S	T	E	A	K
S	E	A	F	A	R	E	R	■	E	T	E	R	N	E
■	■	■	A	L	A	■	■	T	R	E	E	■	■	■
B	U	T	I	M	N	E	V	E	R	W	R	O	N	G
E	N	U	R	E	■	L	I	R	A	■	I	L	I	A
G	I	B	E	S	■	M	O	R	N	■	N	I	N	E
S	T	A	R	T	■	S	L	A	T	■	G	O	A	L

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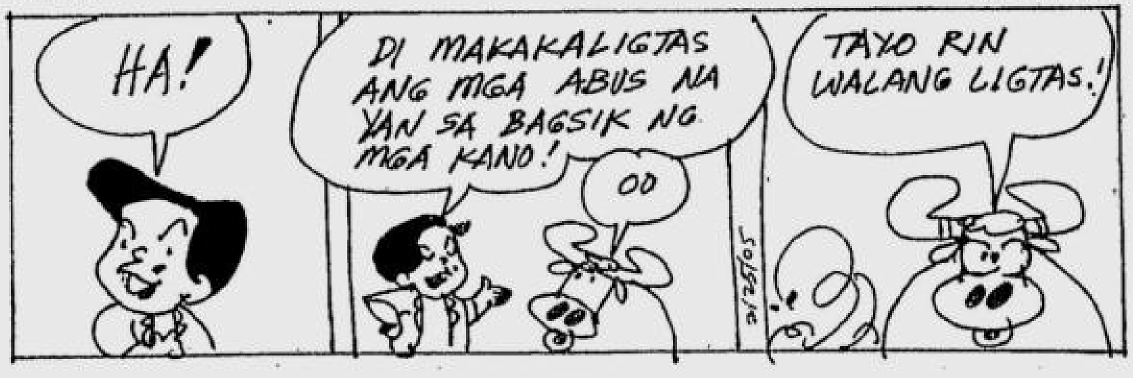
2/25/05

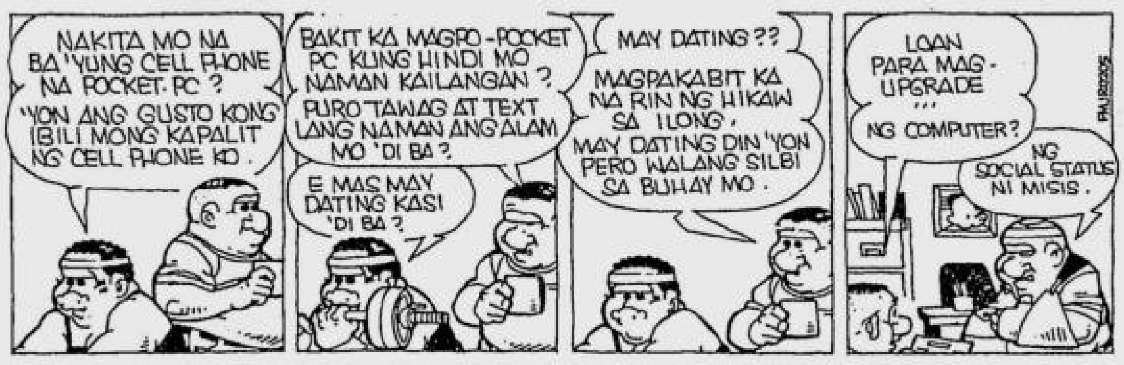
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HA!
DI MAKAKALIGTAS ANG MGA ABUS NA YAN SA BAGSIK NG MGA KANO!
OO
TAYO RIN WALANG LIGTAS.!

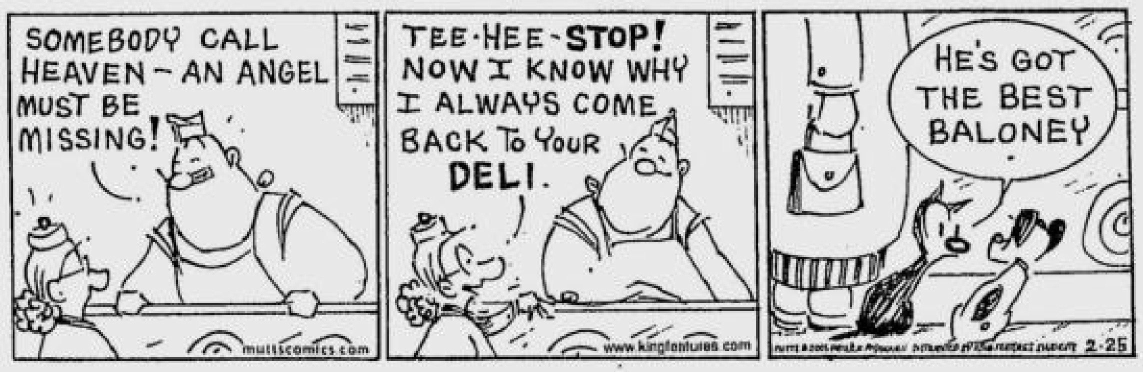
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAKITA MO NA BA 'YUNG CELL PHONE NA POCKET-PC ? 'YON ANG GUSTO KONG IBILI MONG KAPALIT NG CELL PHONE KO.
BAKIT KA MAGPO-POCKET PC KUNG HINDI MO NAMAN KAILANGAN ? PURO TAWAG AT TEXT LANG NAMAN ANG ALAM MO 'DI BA ?
E MAS MAY DATING KASI 'DI BA ?
MAY DATING ??
MAGPAKABIT KA NA RIN NG HIKAW SA ILONG. MAY DATING DIN 'YON PERO WALANG SILBI SA BUHAY MO.
LOAN PARA MAG-UPGRADE ...
NG COMPUTER?
NG SOCIAL STATUS NI MISIS.

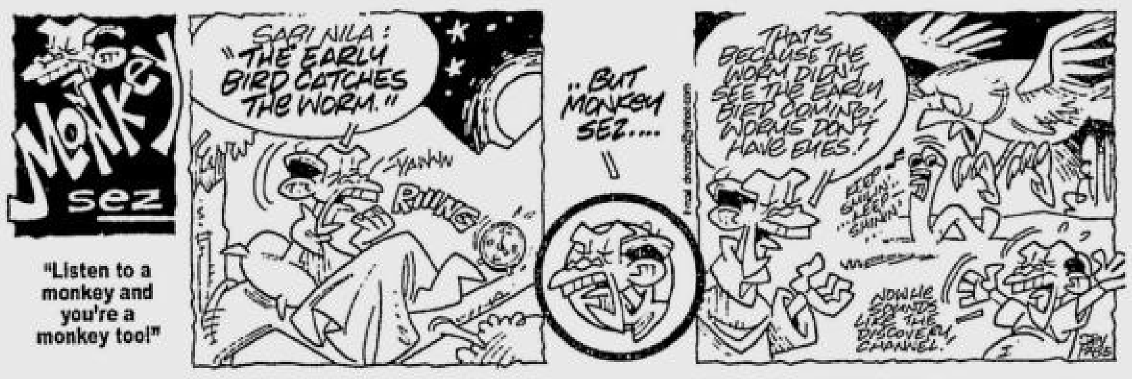
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SOMEBODY CALL HEAVEN – AN ANGEL MUST BE MISSING!
TEE-HEE-STOP! NOW I KNOW WHY I ALWAYS COME BACK TO YOUR DELI.
HE'S GOT THE BEST BALONEY
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
2-25

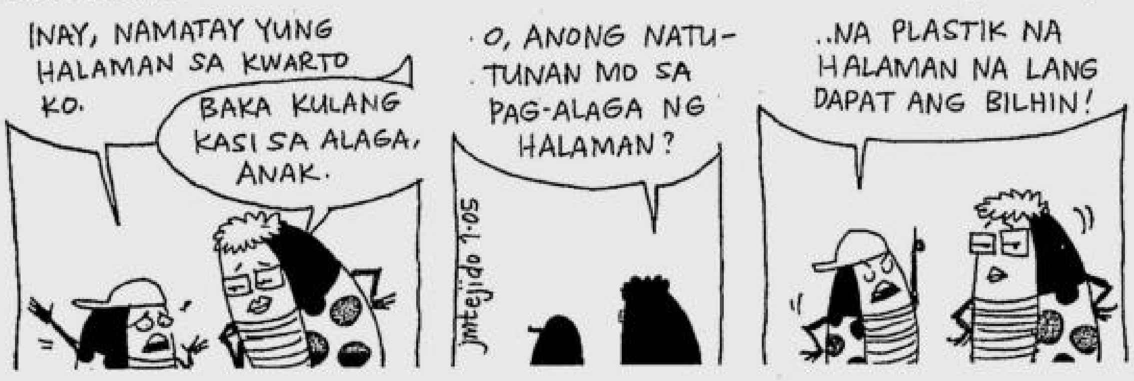
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MONKEY sez
"Listen to a monkey and you're a monkey too!"
SABI NILA: "THE EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE WORM."
YAWN
RIING
..BUT MONKEY SEZ....
THAT'S BECAUSE THE WORM DIDN'T SEE THE EARLY BIRD COMING! WORMS DON'T HAVE EYES!
NOW HE SOUNDS LIKE THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL.

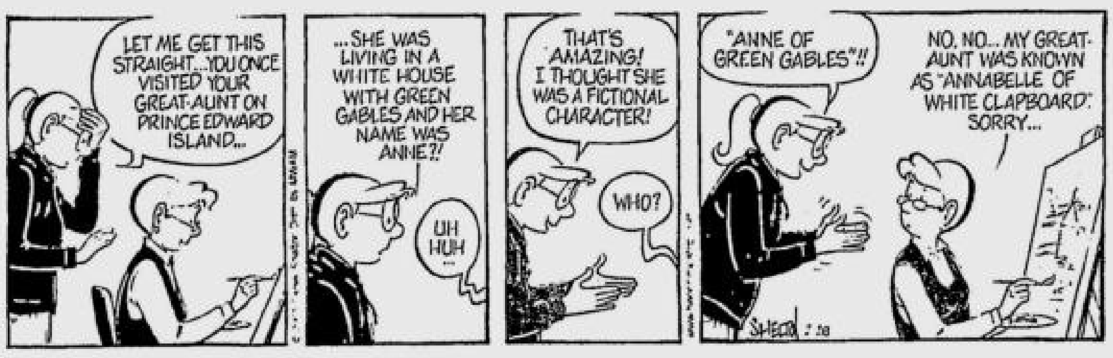
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, NAMATAY YUNG HALAMAN SA KWARTO KO.
BAKA KULANG KASI SA ALAGA, ANAK.
O, ANONG NATUTUNAN MO SA PAG-ALAGA NG HALAMAN?
..NA PLASTIK NA HALAMAN NA LANG DAPAT ANG BILHIN!
jmtejido 1.05

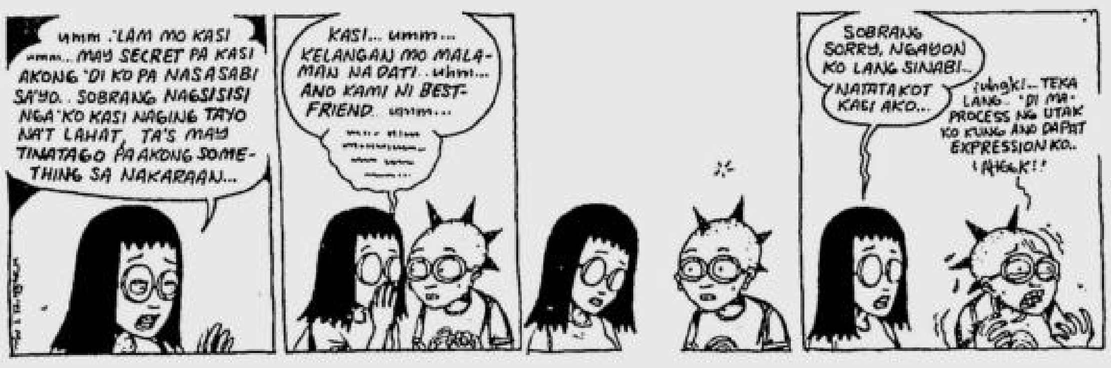
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT...YOU ONCE VISITED YOUR GREAT-AUNT ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND...
...SHE WAS LIVING IN A WHITE HOUSE WITH GREEN GABLES AND HER NAME WAS ANNE?!
UH HUH
THAT'S AMAZING! I THOUGHT SHE WAS A FICTIONAL CHARACTER!
WHO?
"ANNE OF GREEN GABLES"!!
NO, NO... MY GREAT-AUNT WAS KNOWN AS "ANNABELLE OF WHITE CLAPBOARD". SORRY...

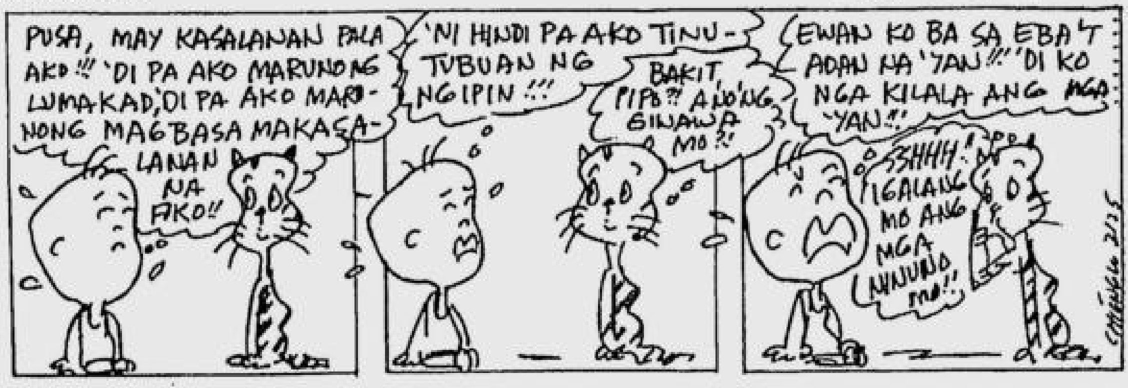
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


umm ..'LAM MO KASI umm... MAY SECRET PA KASI AKONG 'DI KO PA NASASABI SA'YO.. SOBRANG NAGSISISI NGA KO KASI NAGING TAYO NA'T LAHAT, TA'S MAY TINATAGO PA AKONG SOMETHING SA NAKARAAN...
KASI... umm... KELANGAN MO MALAMAN NA DATI.. uhm... AND KAMI NI BEST-FRIEND.. umm...
SOBRANG SORRY, NGAYON KO LANG SINABI.. NATATAKOT KASI AKO...
TEKA LANG.. 'DI MA-PROCESS NG UTAK KO KUNG ANO DAPAT EXPRESSION KO..

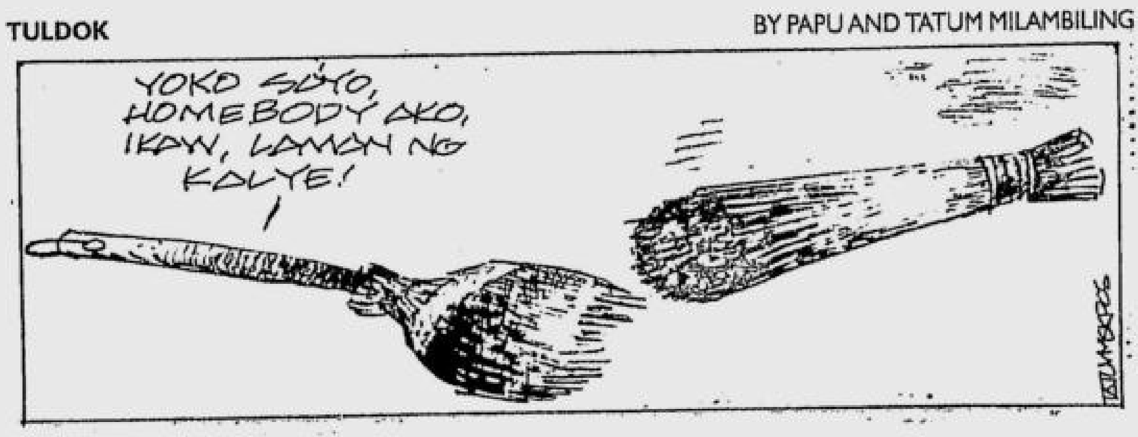
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, MAY KASALANAN PALA AKO!!! 'DI PA AKO MARUNONG LUMAKAD,'DI PA AKO MARUNONG MAGBASA MAKASALANAN NA AKO!!
'NI HINDI PA AKO TINUTUBUAN NG NGIPIN!!!
BAKIT, PIPO?! ANO'NG GINAWA MO?!
EWAN KO BA SA EBA'T ADAN NA 'YAN!!! 'DI KO NGA KILALA ANG MGA 'YAN!!
SSHHH! IGALANG MO ANG MGA NUNUNO MO!!
CHIONGLO 2/25

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


YOKO SÚYO, HOMEBODY AKO, IKAW, LAMAN NG KALYE!

More on Sharon Galvez's elimination from 'AI'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

There should be an Asian Idol search

OUR piece on the failure of Fil-Am bet **Sharon Galvez** to "survive" the third round of the 2005 "American Idol" singing search has elicited a number of reactions from readers:

Some speculated that, while Sharon was a good singer, her age and looks may have done her in. It was noted that most of the 24 talents who survived last week's round were relatively young and very personable.

Another reader said it was a good thing that Sharon was dropped at the 44-survivor level, because the elimination round that followed, in which 20 more were kicked out, would have done her in, anyway.

It was deemed particularly galling, because the 44 survivors weren't even asked to perform. Instead, the jurors based their decisions on a review of previous performance tapes, and on the need to get a particular "mix" of talents for the tilt's final round.

How subjective could you get? Given this chancy state of affairs, it was better for Sharon not to have to be subjected to all that subjectivity.

A third reaction was more vindictive in tone: The respondent opined that the biggest loser here wasn't Sharon, but "American Idol" itself. Why? Because it would be deprived of income from "millions" of text votes for Sharon that would have been sent in by Fil-Americans all over the United States!

For our part, we wonder why Asian singers were snubbed in this year's talent search, while on the "fame" singing tilt, three of the 12 finalists are Asians—Filipino **Jamisen Tiangco**, Taiwanese **Harlem Lee**, and Korean **Raymond Lee**. Clearly, Asian talents continue to excel, so why aren't they on "American Idol"?

Well, it's their loss, not ours. And we trust that this "lockout" will prompt a consortium of producers here to launch an "Asian Idol" TV search, to be participated in by singers from different countries in the region. What do *you* think?

Feedback

FROM **Tintin Bersola-Babao**: "Thank you so much for your wonderful words for me and Julius. *Sobrang* touching! I will be going on leave for two months after I give birth (anytime now). I will be a hands-on, breast-feeding mom. And Julius will be going on a two-week leave."

'Robots'

ACCLAIMED director **Chris Wedge** created the Academy Award-winning short film "Bunny" and the box-office smash "Ice Age." Now, he brings his innovative touch to the animated feature "Robots."

Wedge's new film takes computer-generated animation to a higher level: the feature presents a totally imagined world, a universe populated solely by mechanical beings.

It also boasts of a topnotch vocal cast—**Ewan McGregor, Halle Berry, Greg Kinnear, Mel Brooks, Drew Carey, Jim Broadbent, Amanda Bynes, Stanley Tucci, Paul Giamatti** and **Robin Williams.**

The movie's heartwarming story proves that a robot can shine, no matter what he or she is made of. Carry that over to the human dimension, and you get a relevant point that young viewers can benefit from.

Festival of Cebuano films

LATE last month, Cebuano films were honored and screened in the "Sine ug Katilingban" Film Festival held at SM City in Cebu.

Cebu Gov. **Gwendolyn Garcia**, Cebu City Vice-Mayor **Mike Rama** and National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts **Eddie Romero** also handed out Medallions of Honor to some Cebuano film pioneers and stalwarts.

Cesar Montano was given a special citation for his prizewinning "Panaghoy sa Suba," and **Caridad Sanchez, Gloria Sevilla** and director **Gene Labella** were also honored.

On the event's second day, **Peque Gallaga, Kidlat Tahimik, Kiri Dalena, Gutierrez Mangansakan** and other regional filmmakers attended the First regional Film Congress organized by **Nick Deocampo**. Participants later signed a set of aspirations on how regional filmmaking can help shape the future of Philippine cinema.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.RICKEY.ORG

SHARON GALVEZ: Was it her looks?

BREAKING BOX OFFICE RECORDS!
Richard Gutierrez Angel Locsin
Mark Herras Jennylyn Mercado
Let the Love Begin
Their romantic journey starts here.
Directed by Mac C. Alejandre
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② Dreamboy
③ Infection
④ Son of the Mask
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Free seats for shoppers with P300 single purchase from Market! Market! regular stores on Feb 27, 2005
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Friday, February 25, 2005

TUESDAY 7:30 PM and 10:00 PM
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY 7:00 PM and 10:00 PM
American Idol
SPECIAL SCHEDULE THIS WEEK!
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romansa	Masked Rider Ryuki		Gatekeepers	TV Patrol		Spirits	Krystala	Til Death Do Us Part	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Search For A Star In A Million			Insider
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		GSIS Member's Hour		Network Forum		Teledyaryo		9th Tinig Awards				Ugnayang Pambansa	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA Game-Bol	PBA		PBA		Sentro	PBA					Big News	TNA Impact		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Starstruck	Stairway To Heaven	Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Just For Laughs	Enterprise		Monk		Dead Zone		Newswatch Now	Adboard Golf		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Chowtime Na!		V League				Pulis Na Palaban	IBC News Tonite	GMA The Working President	
Solar		WWE Velocity		Thunder Box		Restol	Ozzy & Drix	Mucha Lucha!	Avengers	Stargate SG1		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		Wow	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	1, 2, 3	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Star MYX	Club MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		What I Like About You	JKX	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	Will & Grace	Simple Life 2	Iron Chef		Fame		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Elimidate	Change of Heart
Cinema One		Wala Na Bang Pag-ibig				Drama Studio: Ikaw Pa Lang Ang Minahal				Urban Rangers			Cinema One Presents: Review Night	Cine Tonight: Kilabot				Ticket: Pops On High	
Studio 23				Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius			Justice League	Wazzup Wazzup	Spider-Man: The Animated Series			Playing It Straight		News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show		Yes Dear		
AXN		The Glass House				Now See This (Season II)	Now See This (Season II)	Samurai X	Samurai X	Andromeda (Season III)		The Right Stuff II	Rated X	Cold Squad		Last Action Hero			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	Weird TV	Really Caught In The Act		Friends	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		NG See		Journey Of Man				The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles Dr. Brady Barr	Wild		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		NG See		Supercroc	
Solar Sports		IBF China Super Grand Prix WS		ATP Open 13 2005	Sounds of the Finals			All Star Saturday				In This Corner		NBA Game Sacramento @ Dallas					GWS ep.8-2005
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest							Back To Basics		
HBO			The Mirror Has Two Faces (3.40PM)				Slap Shot 2: Breaking The Ice (5.45PM)			Ghost Ship (7.15PM)			HBO Sneak Peek: The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King	Austin Powers In Gold Member			Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle		
Star Movies		River's Edge (3:10PM)			The Ticket (4.45PM)	Rocky V (5.15PM)				Air Force One				Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of Black Pearl					The Mummy (11.25PM)
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	Codename: Kids Next Door	Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Megas XLR	Aqua Teen (11:15PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN				Big 10 Conf.: Wisconsin vs. Michigan St.				Goals!	Big 10 Conf.: Purdue vs. Indiana				World Pool Trick Shot Masters '04				Sportscenter Taiwan	English premier league preview	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies.	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/Untalkative Bunny	A Ring Of Endless Light			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Stitch The Movie	
Cinemax			Splendor In The Grass				The Perfect Husband			Eight Legged Freaks (7.15 PM)				Hollywood Confidential			Secretary		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Jessica 2				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Judging Amy		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye		Just Desserts			Child Of Our Time (10:35PM)	Crime Night	Judging Amy (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Junkyard Wars		American Chopper		Journey To The Bottom Of Sea		Ultimate Discovery			
MTV Philippines		Whatever Things	Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Most Wanted		MTV Classic (Ver 2)		Hoobastank: A Rock Special	MTV Diyes		Newlyweds	Be Seen @ MTV	Faking the Video	Laguna Beach	Be Seen @ MTV	MTV Screen	VH1 Video Collections	
Sports Plus	Nissan Open Day4						Porsche md 7&8	Italia Series A				World Poker Tour ep.: Mississippi				Inside the PGA	World Golf C'ships Accenture Match Day2		
EWTN	Does The Church Still Teach That	Angelus (3.15PM)	Stations Of The Cross	Image Of God	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Search And Rescue	Your Call	EWTN Gallery	Life on The Rock Encore		Gospel Of Life In Health Care	Defending Life	Daily Mass		Angelus (10.15PM)	Backstage	Father Corapi And The Catechism Of The Catholic Church	

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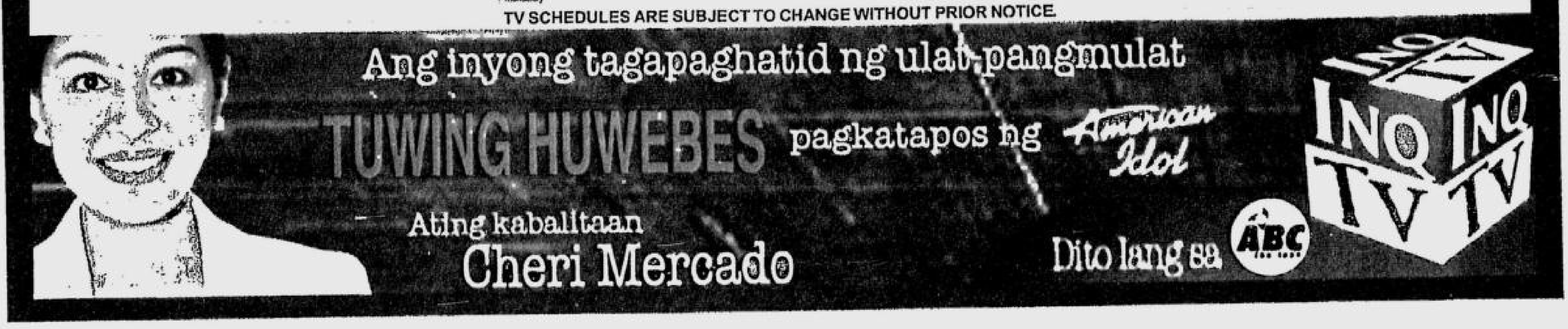

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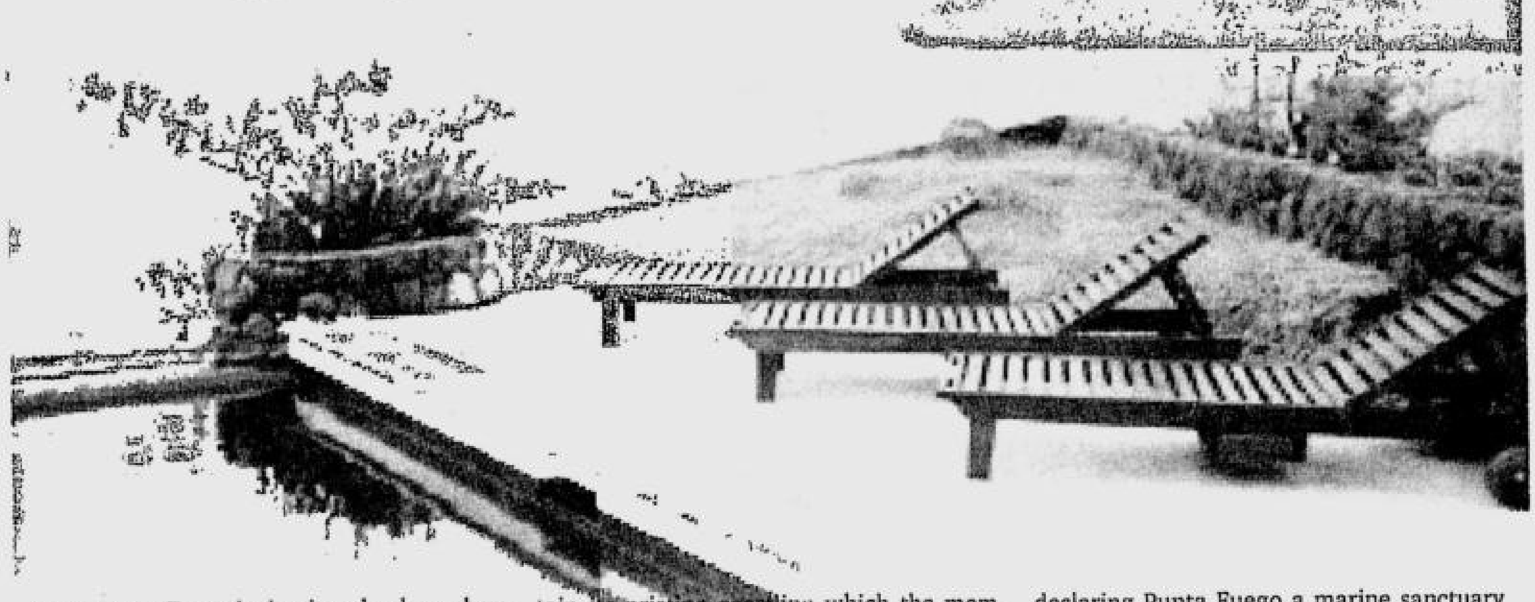

CLUB Punta Fuego invites its valued members to get ready and rush themselves to Nasugbu as the club welcomes them for the much anticipated "Fuego Your Summer 2005!"

To jumpstart the fun and exciting activities this summer season, the club invites all members, their families and friends to participate in the "2005 Punta Fuego Coastal Clean-up" on March 5 and 6 and join their community in its thrust to protect the coastline of Punta Fuego. Fueled with enthusiasm, this worthwhile event will be participated by the diving community and environmentally conscious volunteers to help in the preservation of the marine habitat around the waters of Punta Fuego as well as maintain its pristine coastline which the members continue to enjoy.

In partnership with Eureka Dive and Citibank Gold, the "2005 Punta Fuego Coastal Clean-up" will not just be an ordinary environmental awareness event. After the clean-up, volunteer members and guests will be treated to a free cruise around Punta Fuego aboard M/Y Nethanya's Ark and freebies from gracious sponsors. They will also be treated to special snacks and refreshments courtesy of Gourmet's. Moreover, there will be a forum on "Coastal Preservation and Rehabilitation" at the Upper Beach Club with guest speakers from WWF and the Mayor's Office to discuss the proposal of declaring Punta Fuego a marine sanctuary and to introduce the "Punta Fuego Environmental Fund" for the program. To cap it all off, a Sunset Beach Party at the Lower Beach Club with lively entertainment will be hosted by the club to all members, guests and volunteer divers to celebrate the start of an exhilarating summer experience at Punta Fuego. Raffle prizes and freebies also await partygoers for this "Fuego your Summer 2005" beach party.

For more details, contact (043) 729-0180 to 82 and look for Jake Valera or Manu Mantecon or the Membership and Marketing Department at (02) 751-4025 to 27 and look for Francis de Leon.

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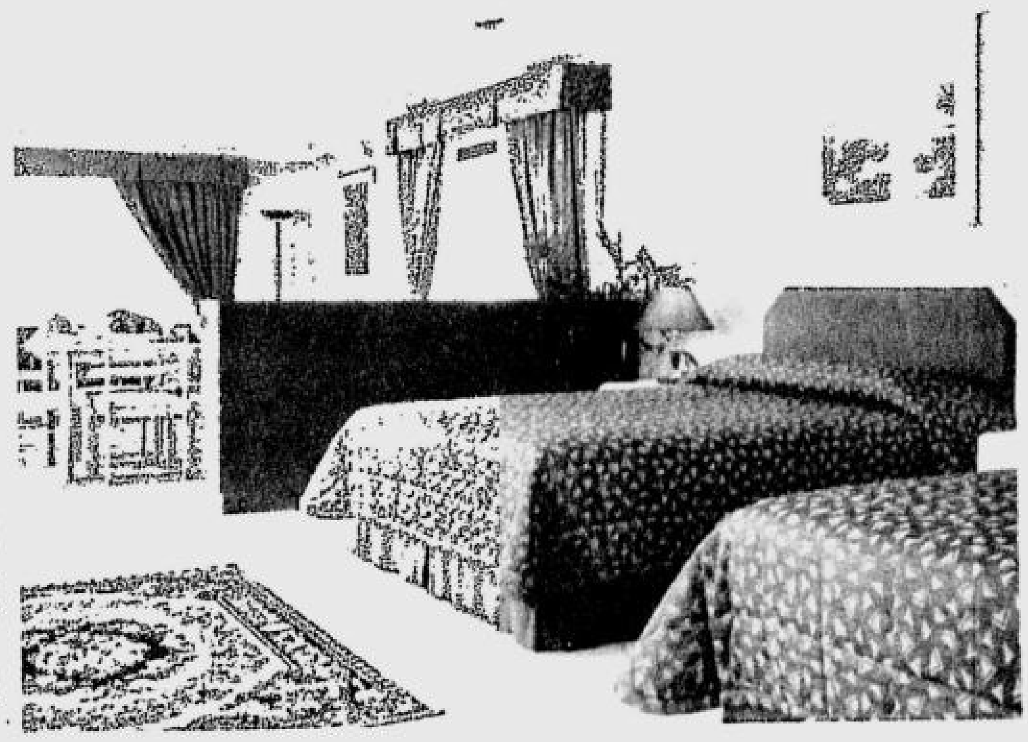

CONGRESSMAN BARBERS VISITS THE PALM HOTELS
Rep. Robert 'Ace' Barbers (sitting, 2nd from left) recently visited the famed group of Hotels in Malate - The Palm Hotels. He is one of the active supporters of The Palm Hotels' projects and activities. Also shown in the photo are: (sitting from left) Mon Capistrano; Ghie T. Gomez, The Palm Hotels corporate director of sales; Anne Dizon, Las Palmas Hotel sales manager; Myles Tomas, The Executive Plaza Hotel sales executive assistant; (standing, from left) Christel Torres, Palm Plaza Hotel's sales executive assistant; Kristine Paras, The Executive Plaza Hotel's account manager; Alan Dimayuga, The Palm Hotels corporate general manager; and Michelle Aglipay, The Executive Plaza Hotel's public relations assistant.

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’04 trade deficit down 45% to $702M

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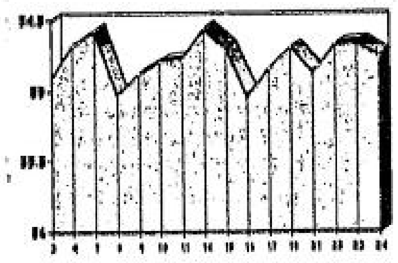

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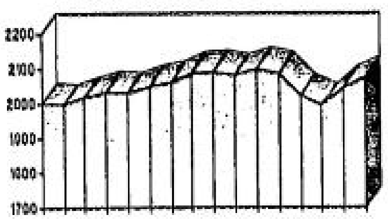
STOCK MARKET

Stocks up 1.49%

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



SHARE prices yesterday closed 1.49 percent higher on bargain hunting for a second day of solid gains following recent sharp losses, dealers said.

They said investors continued to favor stocks with strong 2004 earnings prospects as well as those seen well positioned for recovery, ahead of a long weekend.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index closed up 30.41 points at 2,073.19, just off the day's high of 2,073.94.

Volume reached 4.94 billion shares worth P1.5 billion from Wednesday's 2.6 billion shares worth P1.36 billion.

Gainers led losers 66 to 43, while 43 stocks ended unchanged.

The market will be closed today for a public holiday.

"Some investors who were not able to buy yesterday did so today. Companies with compelling stories continue to generate interest," Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities said.

Unicapital Securities analyst Dianne Sy said the market's technical recovery continued from Wednesday, but the main index was expected to give up gains next week as the technical rebound had come earlier than expected.

Shares fell more than 100 points or around five percent for three sessions from last Friday as investors took profits following the market's rally to a five-year high.

AFP

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S trade deficit last year dropped by 44.5 percent to $702 million from $1.3 billion in 2003, as export growth outpaced that of imports.

Data from the National Statistics Office showed that imports during the year rose by only 7 percent to $40 billion from $37.5 billion in 2003, while exports grew by 9.3 percent to $39.6 billion from $36.24 billion.

Total trade during the year amounted to $79.9 billion or 8.4 percent higher than the previous year's $73.73 billion.

In December 2004, alone, imports dropped by 0.9 percent to $3.04 billion from $3.07 billion in the same month in 2003. This was the first time imports had contracted since May 2004. With exports growing by 2.9 percent during the period to $3.27 billion, the country posted a 115-percent increase in trade surplus in December to $223 million from year-ago's $103 million.

Despite the decline in the trade gap, analysts said the slowing imports pointed to potentially weaker exports ahead.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo L. Neri said the 7-percent increase in imports during the year fell short of the government's 10-percent target.

In a memorandum to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the chief of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) admitted that it was the decline in the importation of capital goods and raw materials that pulled down the overall importation figure.

Citing figures of the NSO, Neri said importation of capital goods and raw materials in December had contracted by 8 percent to $1.2 billion.

Also in December, the importation of electronics, representing 40.7 percent of the import bill during the month, plunged 17.4 percent to $1.23 billion. Electronics products imported included semiconductors and electronic data processing, which were assembled locally and reexported.

Neri said the decline in the importation of electronics and capital goods, such as industrial machinery and equipment, indicated the likely softening of the country's electronics exports this year.

Neri said that importation of consumer goods jumped 34.3 percent in December to $266 million in the light of the holiday season. In the same month, the import bill for raw materials and intermediate goods accounted for 36.2 percent of the total.

For the entire year, Japan remained that country's biggest source of imported goods with an 18.5-percent share of the total, followed by the United States with 16.3 percent. China also increased its share from 4.8 percent of the total imports in 2003 to 6.3 percent in 2004.

Neri said that the outlook for the country's electronics exports remained flat due to a sharp slowdown in the global demand for semiconductors this year.

Globe blinks, offers unlimited phone plan

By Clarissa S. Batino

RUNNING the risk of losing vital market share, Globe Telecom Inc. has been left with no choice but to offer its own unlimited within-network call and text promo for subscribers of its Touch Mobile brand.

Starting March, Touch Mobile will offer a buffet voice and text rate of P300 for 30 days, and unlimited text for as low as P50 for five days.

The offer is supposedly good for only 30 days beginning March 1. This will be on top of existing Touch Mobile plans.

The unlimited plan will not be available to Globe subscribers, a source said. But Touch Mobile, which is powered by Globe, may ride on its affiliate's network of about 4,000 cellular stations that can cover about 90 percent of the population.

Yesterday, Globe officials were still unsure whether they could launch the campaign by Tuesday.

Sun Cellular set off a price war when it offered its 24/7 plan, featuring an unlimited call and text service for P250 a month or P100 for 10 days,,on top of existing plans.

Sun Cellular is the trade name of Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc.

Sun Cellular only has about 1,300 sites, but it has plans to expand its network to about 2,000 this year.

Globe's Innove Communications Inc., which operates the Touch Mobile brand, had notified the National Telecommunications Commission of its promo.

Rate cuts normally do not need the commission's approval. But an NTC official said that with the con-

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VAT exemption lifting to earn for gov't ₱57B

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT stands to collect more than P57 billion in tax revenue once the value added tax (VAT) exemptions of the petroleum and power sectors are lifted, data from the Department of Energy show.

At a VAT rate of 10 percent, Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said the government could collect P32.7 billion from the petroleum industry and P24.9 billion from the power sector, including the generation and transmission sectors.

But the figures used as basis in the computation, he explained, were taken from 2003 petroleum and power consumption. Using 2004 figures, when demand for fuels went up by 20 percent, the amount could even be higher.

He was quick to add, however, that the DOE figures did not take into consideration the input VAT component that the Department of Finance took into account in computing the final VAT yield that the government would end up with.

"We at the DOE used figures based on our records. We could only calculate the gross output VAT, and not the net because we don't know the input VAT component. The net VAT is calculated by the DOF," he told the INQUIRER.

Based on DOF's calculations and taking the input VAT component into consideration, the government could generate some P10 billion from petroleum products and more than P2 billion from the power sector.

This, however, is P45 billion short of the DOE's computations.

A source explained that not the entire amount that the DOE computed could be slapped with VAT as part of this constituted the input VAT component.

Of the gross output VAT computed by the DOE, 44 percent was considered input VAT. Of the remaining 56 percent, only 40 percent could be slapped with the VAT as the 60 percent was considered "consumed by VAT-able entities."

This then brings down the DOE's P32.7-billion projection for petroleum products to roughly P10 billion, and its P24.9-billion projection for the power sector to only P2.1 billion.

For generation and transmission firms, for example, the gross output VAT amount to P20.5 billion and P4.4 billion, respectively.

The input VAT for generation is placed at P22.6 billion and that for transmission is P250,000.

Taking away the input VAT component from the gross output VAT, the government would end up with almost P2.1 billion from the power sector.

"Fuel and power are consumed as inputs to production. VAT will be collected from the products sold at the end. Only P12 billion will be collected from the sale of the fuels and power not entering the production stream, but around P56 billion is the total gross contribution of fuels and power to the VAT revenues of the country," the source said.

Transco privatization backed

ENERGY Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. lauded the strong support recently given by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago for the immediate privatization of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

Santiago, who chairs the Senate Energy Committee and a member of the Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC) said she was ready to give the go-ahead to the privatization of Transco, which is expected to fetch some $2 billion for the government.

In a statement, Perez said Santiago's support "is a major boost to the government's power sector privatization program."

Her favorable position on the Transco issue will significantly speed up the process resulting in the early inflow of financial resources for the modernization of the power transmission sub-sector, he added.

Santiago said she would persuade other legislators to adopt the legal opinion of Senator Juan Ponce Enrile that there was no need for the buyer of Transco to secure a new franchise from Congress. Enrile earlier said "there is no legal impediment to privatize Transco."

Santiago noted that the sale of Transco "has been undergoing undue delay and said the adoption of the Enrile position "will finally lead to the eventual privatization of Transco."

Perez said Santiago's move "is a big help to the effort to preserve and upgrade the country's valuable transmission assets." He said the government cannot on its own raise the needed funds to continue maintaining these assets and to modernize them.

Women farmers fight TB, blindness

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

THE WOMEN farmers of San Miguel, Bulacan, believe in building transformative communities. They take responsibility for formulating their own agenda to benefit their community. They then ask and work with the government to implement it.

They have recently decided to make the farmer's health a top priority, especially the fight against tuberculosis (TB) and blindness. Three months ago, they brought this agenda to their mayor and municipal health officer, who gladly adopted their proposal in the official municipal health program.

Background

When I related this to Dr. Jimmy Galvez Tan, former health secretary, he said that tuberculosis and blindness appeared to be the correct areas to address. In tuberculosis incidence, we are No.1 in the Western Pacific and in the top 20 out of 170 countries. In blindness incidence, we are again No.1 in the Western Pacific and No. 3 in the world. I asked why this was so.

For tuberculosis, Galvez-Tan said: "Many people don't want to come forward to be treated because of the social stigma attached to TB. They still think it takes five years or more to be treated, during which time they believe they are contagious. But today, the contagious period is only two weeks, and the treatment is completed in six months. If this knowledge were more widespread, many more would come for treatment."

For blindness, he said that the major cause for adults is cataract. For children, the causes are measles and vitamin A deficiency. Blindness can decrease significantly if widespread information is given on early cataract detection, vaccines against measles, and vitamin A sources such as our plentiful green leafy vegetables.

When a farmer is weakened by tuberculosis or hindered by failing eyesight, he or she can no longer work. This is why the San Miguel women farmers wanted immediate attention to these two problem areas.

Decentralization

As for resource allocation, it was found that 70 percent of provincial health budgets are spent on hospitals. However, this reaches only 1-5 percent of the population. The remaining 30 percent is spent on decentralized methods of delivery such as *barangay* health centers and rural health units, which reach 60 percent of the population. It has been recommended that a larger allocation be given to the decentralized mode of health delivery. Given the current situation, the farmers have no choice but to assist in decentralized health service delivery.

Dr. Jaime Montoya, former president of the Anti TB Coalition of the Philippines and board member of the Physicians for Peace, said that the basic problem was not the availability of medicines, but the social preparation necessary so that people would avail themselves of the anti TB cures. Dr. Roger Valencia added: "TB mimics other diseases. If people do not consent to being examined for TB, they will be in grave danger of thinking they are being cured for other diseases, when their real disease is TB."

Regarding blindness due to cataracts, there is also a lack of information about the problem. There are foundations ready to supply cataract lenses. However, they are looking for the social network necessary to distribute these lenses efficiently.

Taking action

It is in this environment that the Samahang Kababaihan ng San Miguel, Bulacan (KBB), composed mostly of women farmers, took action. Talking with People's Organizations (POs) and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in their community, they proposed a decentralized approach with heavy private sector participation to combat TB and blindness. This is the same organization that won a UN award for best rural project for women in Asia in 1984 and best in the world in 1989. Their main guiding principle is building transformative communities.

The KBB has gone beyond the municipal government to national and international organizations in pursuit of their goal.

To fight TB, they got the help of the Physicians for Peace Philippines, founded by Dr. Juan Montero, a thoracic Filipino American doctor from Virginia, United States, They have secured donations for community center medical equipment from the United States, and have already sponsored training for the San Miguel women farmers to disseminate valuable anti TB information.

To fight blindness, Sukob, an NGO headed by Dr. Teresa Sicat specializing in this area, will provide doctors and supply cataract lenses.

Five-year program

The KBB, the San Miguel municipal government, and partner POs and NGOs have made this effort into a five-year program. They have jointly committed to a target of coming as close as possible to 0-percent TB and blindness by 2010.

San Miguel Mayor Edmundo Jose Buencamino said, "We have the facilities and people to combat TB and blindness. With the KBB program mobilizing people who most need this help and assisting in decentralization, our municipal resources will now be more effectively utilized."

Dr. Edwin Tecson, the municipal health officer, said this kind of transformative community mobilization would add tremendous value to existing health services not only in San Miguel. It would also be true in most municipalities, which currently do not have this kind of initiative.

To commemorate the birthday of KBB's founding leader, the late Ka Emma Sta Ana, and the International Women's Day, KBB, the municipal government and their PO and NGO partners are launching this five-year health program on March 7 to 11. This will include TB treatments, cataract surgeries, free medical clinics, and a massive *barangay* information campaign. It is hoped that farmers around the country take similar initiatives of building transformative communities in addressing the two key maladies of TB and blindness, which today hamper much of the farmer's productivity.

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary of agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email:agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 8516635)

Marketing Institute of the Philippines
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MARKETING CONVERGENCE

Presents a seminar on
BASICS OF MARKETING A TO Z
March 2, 3 & 4, 2005
1:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati

This seminar helps clear the confusion and jumble in marketing. Thus, it aims to give marketing executives the essential concepts and tools needed to design exceptional marketing programs and effectively function as marketing practitioners.

Target Participants
This seminar is specifically designed for those who may already be doing a marketing management function but whose academic preparation is not marketing. They can be front-line, mid- and upper-level managers in brand management, sales, customer relations, advertising, promotions, media and public relations.

Seminar Objectives
At the end of this seminar on Basics of Marketing A to Z, participants will know the key marketing concepts like the macro and micro of marketing, 4P's (product, place, price and promotion), consumer behavior and target marketing.

Methodology
Lectures, exercises, and in-class application projects relate specifically to the workplace, hence, participants can immediately apply new concepts and skills. Resource speakers are multi-awarded marketing practitioners who will share their experiences and insights about the Basics of Marketing.

SEMINAR PROGRAM
Day 1 – March 2, 2005 (Wednesday)
Introductory Session – 1:00 – 1:30 pm
Basic Business and Marketing concepts
Session Chair: Ms. Marivic Ac-Ac
Professor, San Beda College
Session 1 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
The Enigma of Marketing Mix in Today's Business Environment
Speaker: Ms. Marivic Ac-Ac
Professor, San Beda Collage
Session 2 – 3:45-5:30 pm
How Consumer Analysis Affects Business Strategy
Speaker: Mr. Ricardo de Vera
President, Pin Point Direct Marketing
BRIEFING ON THE FINAL PROJECT – 5:45 – 6:00 pm

Day 2 – March 3, 2005 (Thursday)
Link Up Session – 1:00 – 1:30 pm
Session 3 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Crucial Areas in Market Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning
Speaker: Ms. Ma. Teresa V. Gargantiel*
Senior Executive Officer, Jimenez Basic
Session 4 - 3:45 – 5:30 pm
Mapping the Winning Strategies for Tougher Times
Speaker: Ms. Vivian Faustino
Assistant Vice President
International Exchange Bank
BRAINSTORMING – 5:30 – 6:00 PM

Day 3 – March 4, 2005 (Friday)
Link Up Session – 1:00 – 1:30 pm
Session 5 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Connecting with your Consumers through Effective Communication
Speaker: MR. ANTONIO S. VENTOSA*
Managing Director, Leo-Burnett
PRESENTATION OF CASES/SUMMATION – 3:45 – 5:30 pm
*speaker to be confirmed

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Quedancor gets BSP nod to raise ₱1.5B

By Christine A. Gaylican

AGRICULTURE and micro-finance lender Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) has obtained the permission of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to auction off P1.5 billion worth of long-term bonds this year to finance its loan funding requirements.

According to Nelson Buenaflor, Quedancor president and chief executive officer, the 3-year, 4-year and 5-year bonds will have similar rates as the prevailing long term government-issued treasury bills.

"Proceeds from the bond issuance will be used for our loan base expansion and to finance pending loan applications worth P2.8 billion until the second quarter of 2005," Buenaflor said.

Quedancor would initially issue P1 billion worth of bonds through the United Coconut Planters Bank.

The bond issuance was lower than the $2.85 billion Quedancor originally proposed. The BSP's Monetary Board cut the amount to P1.6 billion.

Quedancor's 2004 revenues increased by 64 percent to P1.04 billion.

Buenaflor said that access to credit from government and private banks had allowed the government-owned firm to re-lend to 211,274 borrowers engaged in agriculture, livestock, aquaculture as well as in small and medium enterprises.

"We are now more confident that Quedancor could meet its loan lending target of P5 billion to the farm and fishery sector this year, Buenaflor said.

Quedancor has been the credit conduit of financial institutions like the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Philippine Veterans Bank, the United Coconut Planters Bank and the Equitable-PCI Bank.

The Philippine National Bank recently approved P1 billion in new loans for agriculture and micro-finance lender Quedancor.

The PNB has decided to open a rediscounting window from Bangko Sentral in order to purchase debt papers from Quedancor.

"These loans would allow more credit to flow to the agricultural sector even in the medium term," Buenaflor said.

Motorola to come out with low-cost handsets

By Clarissa S. Batino

A GLOBAL association of wireless operators is hoping to sell 6 million low-cost handsets this year in emerging markets like the Philippines, India, Indonesia and Turkey, according to Motorola.

The phone manufacturer said it would release in the second quarter a new line of low-cost units in line with the "emerging market handset program," which the GSM Association recently approved.

Motorola said the GSM Association was targeting an initial volume of 6 million handsets—about one percent of the global handset market—in the first 6 months of the program.

"This new market segment has the potential to add more than 100 million new connections per year," said Motorola in a statement.

The firm was tasked by the GSM Association to supply the units for its emerging market handset program. The GSM Association is a global group of wireless operators now headed by Napoleon Nazareno, president of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

About 40 percent of 84 million Filipinos have cellular phones. The number, according to Motorola, could increase dramatically with the introduction of cheaper models.

Motorola said it would develop a set of products based on its new, low-cost C114 platform, offering durability and longer talk time.

According to the GSM Association, 80 percent of the world's population now have wireless access, but only 25 percent are able to avail themselves of the technology.

PRULINK — **PRU LIFE U.K.**

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week February 22, 2005	Last Week February 15, 2005
Bond Fund - Peso	1.20918	1.21139
ManagedFund - Peso	1.32887	1.34168
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0997	1.1034

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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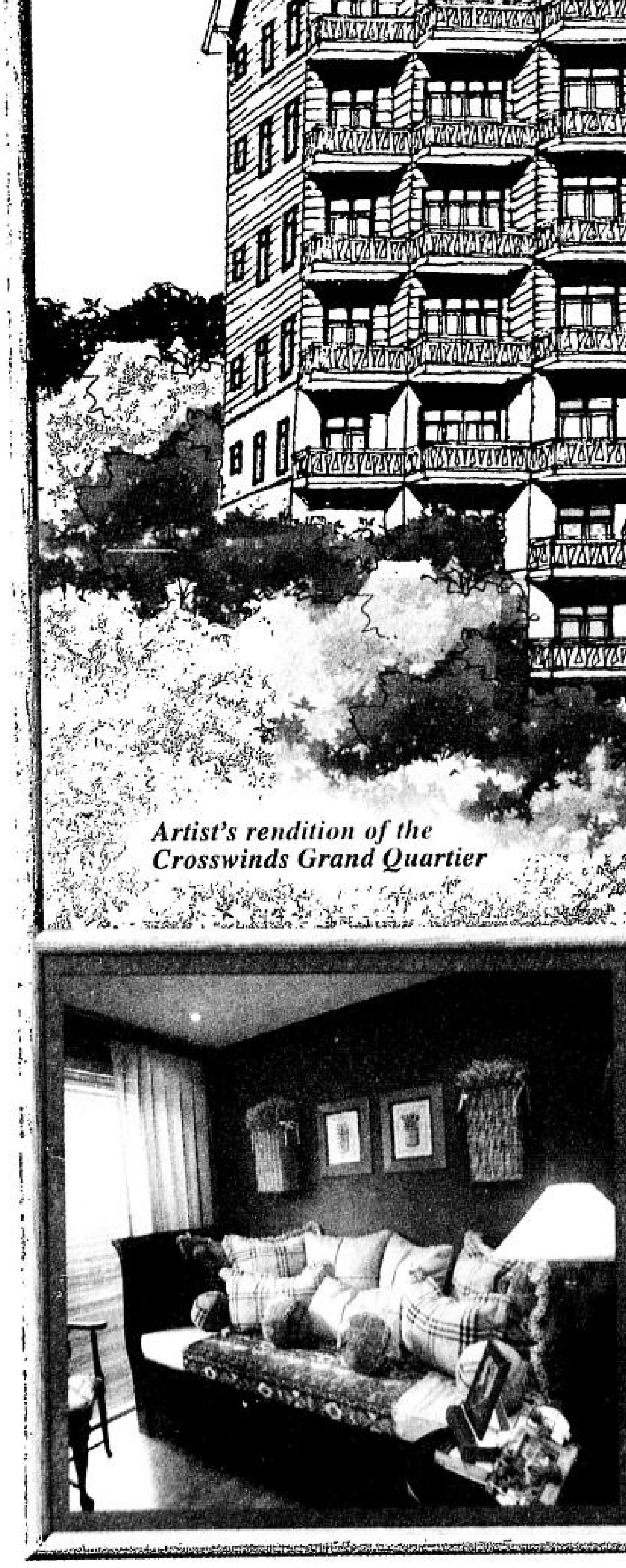
HOW SWISS IT IS

Artist's rendition of the Crosswinds Grand Quartier


One look at the Grand Quartier, (pronounced as kwôr 'ti-Er) and you know it is unmistakably Swiss. Designed with wood patterns, overhanging eaves, stone cladding and dark asphalt roof shingles, the Grand Quartier takes inspiration from classic Swiss chalets. Inside, the inspiration is carried through with the patterned wood floors and ceilings and the Swiss concept of a great room for spending time with family or guests.

And it will soon stand on the Crosswinds hillside, surrounded by pine trees, in the cool air and the calm, quiet ambience. It's the perfect weekend home for enjoying the great Swiss life.

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SM Investments sets roadshow

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SM INVESTMENTS Corp. is all set to go on an international roadshow next week in preparation for an initial public offering of shares.

SMIC shares are scheduled to be listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange on March 22.

SMIC vice chair Henry Sy Jr. yesterday told a forum of prospective investors that Hong Kong will be the first stop of the roadshow.

"From there, we would swing around Singapore, then to European cities like Frankfurt, Paris, London, Edinburgh, then finally to the United States," Sy said.

The holding company will offer to the public between 75 million and 140 million common shares at between P230 and P300 per share.

According to the preliminary prospectus, 65 percent of the offer shares will be initially placed in the United States to qualified institutional buyers.

The rest will be offered to local buyers.

SMIC is conducting the IPO through global coordinator and international lead manager Macquarie Securities (Asia) Pte. Ltd. and domestic issue manager and lead underwriter BDO Capital and Investment Corp.

The company expects to raise between P12.94 billion and P32.5 billion in gross proceeds from the offering.

SMIC plans to use 68 percent of the IPO proceeds on projects related to property development, tourism and leisure and general investments.

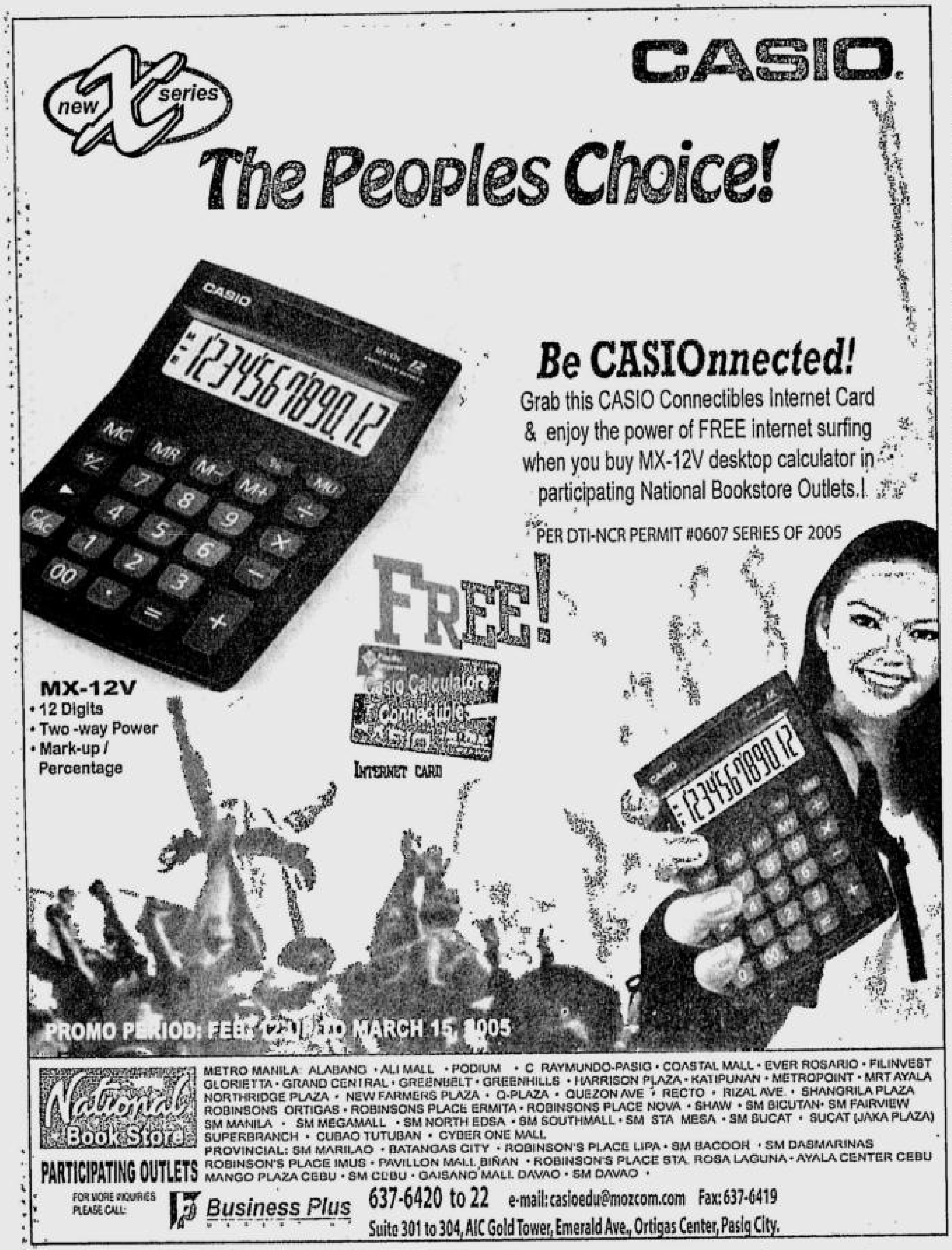
The rest would be used to pay loans and liabilities.

During the forum, officials said owning shares in SMIC was promising as the firm was leader in the businesses it was involved in.

The officials said SMIC, which has 23 SM malls nationwide, held half of the local retailing market and 53 percent of the total gross floor area of all malls in the country.

For the year ending March 31, 2004, commercial centers and retail businesses contributed 63.7 percent and 39.5 percent of the company's consolidated net income of P4.04 billion.

In the nine months ending Dec. 31, 2004, SMIC's unaudited consolidated net income hit P3.9 billion.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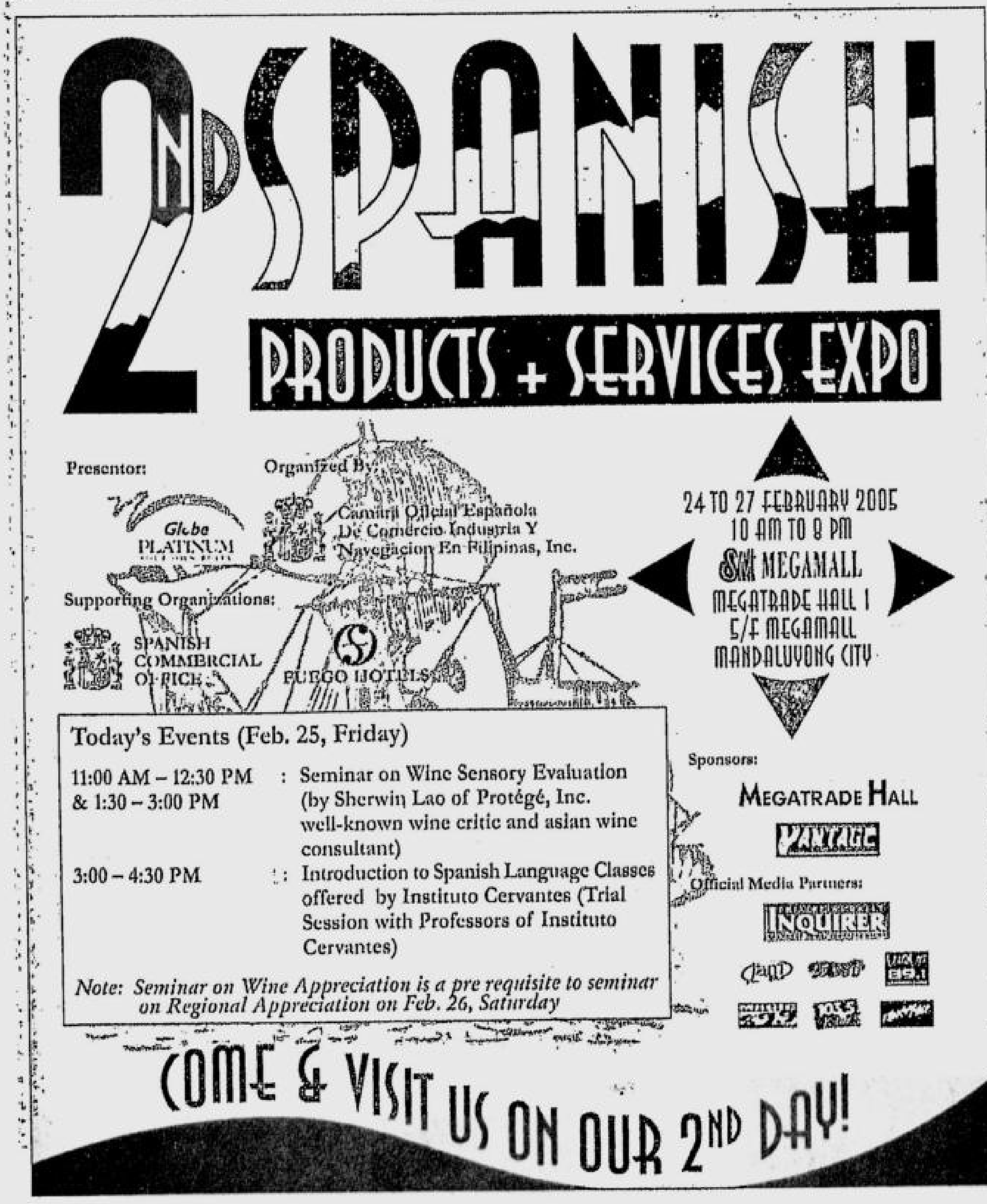
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11:00 AM – 12:30 PM & 1:30 – 3:00 PM : Seminar on Wine Sensory Evaluation (by Sherwin Lao of Protégé, Inc. well-known wine critic and asian wine consultant)
3:00 – 4:30 PM : Introduction to Spanish Language Classes offered by Instituto Cervantes (Trial Session with Professors of Instituto Cervantes)
Note: Seminar on Wine Appreciation is a pre requisite to seminar on Regional Appreciation on Feb. 26, Saturday
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Globe

From page B1

troversy being generated by the telco price war, the commission's approval may have to be obtained before Touch Mobile can launch its promo.

As of end-2004, Touch Mobile counted 1.698 million subscribers, slightly up from 1.5 million in 2003.

Globe, including Touch Mobile, ended 2004 with a total of 12.5 million subscribers—11.88 million of whom were prepaid, while 630,495 were postpaid.

Touch Mobile competes in the same mass market as Pilipino Telephone Corp.'s Talk 'N Text. Of Smart's more than 19 million subscribers last year, more than 4 million use the Talk 'N Text brand.

A source said that Globe's move might do it more harm than good.

According to the source, Globe may gain the flighty prepaid subscribers at the expense of its postpaid customers who are expected to suffer from the traffic that the buffet pricing will generate.

"The traffic that Touch Mobile will generate will affect even Globe subscribers who are not going to benefit from the promo," the source said. "I think this is kamikaze for Globe."

In the middle of January, Touch Mobile slashed its call rates to P1 per minute, starting the third minute of call, but only within network.

A sluggish performance of Touch Mobile prompted Globe to reassess its position in the market last year and re-launch the brand.

Touch Mobile is the brand that Globe has positioned to pierce the lower segment of the wireless market. But the brand, so far, has not delivered substantial results.

Globe president Gerardo Ablaza earlier said the company wanted to strengthen the Touch Mobile brand so it could play a bigger role in the company's bid to penetrate the mass market more effectively.

Ablaza recently said that Sun Cellular could be affecting Globe's potential to grow the market for second phones.

Lance Gokongwei, president of Digitel said that Sun Cellular was being positioned to tap the market for second phones.

The strategy now, he said, was to urge customers to use Sun Cellular as a second phone while tapping new subscribers from the young and low-end market.

With its 24/7 plan, Gokongwei said the company would also encourage its use as a fixed-line alternative.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 24, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	110,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29	30	29	30	315,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57	58	57	58	569,200
China Banking Corp.	660	680	660	680	240
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48	48	48	48	28,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.86	0.89	0.86	0.87	6,410,000
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	31,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	37.5	38	37	37.5	1,562,300
Philippine National Bank	32	33.5	32	33	46,600
Phil. Savings Bank	30	30	30	30	100
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	29.5	29	29	45,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	50,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	1,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2500	2500	2500	2500	40
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	158,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1745	1745	1745	1745	170
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.5	18	17.5	18	86,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.48	1.54	1.48	1.5	15,859,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	39,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	935	925	930	34,310
Ipeople Inc.	4.5	4.8	4.5	4.8	158,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.065	0.0575	0.06	36,100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0625	0.075	0.0625	0.07	224,200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.6	4,376,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1365	1385	1365	1375	37,420
Ivantage Corp.	0.78	0.79	0.75	0.75	7,400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.014	0.021	0.014	0.02	2,406,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17.75	18.75	17.5	18.25	350,900
Manila Electric Co. B	27	29	27	28	4,234,100
Petron Corp.	3.8	4	3.8	3.95	6,503,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	10,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	165,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	98,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	30,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	8.1	7.6	8.1	1,358,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	280,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	29,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.55	1,160,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.15	4.45	4.15	4.25	9,351,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4	4	4	4	10,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	4	4.05	3.9	3.95	558,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	37	37.5	37	37.5	26,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	29	28.5	29	2,414,000
RFM Corp.	0.9	0.95	0.9	0.95	430,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	310,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57	56.5	57	66,100
San Miguel Corp. B	79	79.5	79	79.5	59,200
Universal Robina Corp.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.9	508,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	810,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	163,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	28,500,000
Ayala Corp.	7.8	8.2	7.8	8.1	5,590,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.63	0.64	0.6	0.6	730,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.45	4.5	4.4	4.5	547,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.25	11.25	11	11	7,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.044	0.046	0.043	0.045	52,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.02	2.1	2.02	2.02	448,000
APC Group Inc.	0.49	0.52	0.47	0.49	31,150,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	142,000,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	12,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.83	0.84	0.83	0.84	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.5	22	21.5	21.5	37,600
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.185	0.175	0.175	5,050,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.46	1.5	1.38	1.38	157,607,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	280,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.22	0.24	0.22	0.24	3,450,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	940,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.61	9,030,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.35	4.5	4.1	4.2	4,158,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.0575	10,800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	19,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	11.75	12	10.75	10.75	2,428,500
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	59	59.5	57	57.5	1,280,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	60,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.105	0.11	12,690,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.84	2,082,000
Ionics Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.74	1.76	127,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.4	3.25	3.4	628,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.08	2.16	2.08	2.14	150,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.66	1.72	2,916,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	1,360,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.62	0.63	0.6	0.61	89,560,000
Prima Orion Phils. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.4	0.41	4,000,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	1,450,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	300,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	450,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.16	8,500,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	150,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	730,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	19,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.72	117,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	120,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.135	0.155	0.13	0.155	31,630,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.74	1.78	1.7	1.7	52,125,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.22	1.24	2,917,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.3	1.32	7,240,000
Manila Jockey Club	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	6,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.39	4,340,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.25	400,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series B	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.1	9.3	9.1	9.3	9,006,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	120,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.94	0.92	0.94	270,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	8,000,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.4	0.4	44,770,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.53	0.54	9,650,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.78	1.78	1,573,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	10,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.82	0.88	0.82	0.88	70,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	350,000
City & Land Developers	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	3,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	70,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	540,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Primex Corp.	3.55	3.6	3.55	3.6	70,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	12,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.3	3,980,000
SM Development Corp.	2	2	1.9	1.9	277,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.5	8.6	8.5	8.6	2,828,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	191,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	185,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	64,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7	7	6.8	6.8	306,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	17,000
Benguet Corp. B	14	14	14	14	4,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	7,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.4	5,510,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.42	41,420,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.02	143,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.028	214,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0085	0.009	0.008	0.0085	486,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.2	1.22	1.16	1.16	503,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.42	1.48	1.4	1.42	2,987,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	45.5	45.5	45	45	1,022,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.3	0.35	0.3	0.35	110,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	3,500,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	98,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	27,000,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	17,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.95	3.15	2.95	3.05	362,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.22	0.26	0.21	0.24	167,750,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.36	0.46	0.36	0.44	900,000

CURRENCIES

February 24, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.756716	1.000000	54.6200
Japan	Yen	0.007221	0.009542	0.5212
United Kingdom	Pound	1.444571	1.909000	104.2696
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097020	0.128212	7.0029
Switzerland	Franc	0.650490	0.859623	46.9526
Canada	Dollar	0.608782	0.804505	43.9421
Singapore	Dollar	0.464956	0.614439	33.5607
Australia	Dollar	0.594342	0.785423	42.8998
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.007257	2.652590	144.8845
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.201791	0.266667	14.5654
Brunei	Dollar	0.463532	0.612557	33.4579
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019686	0.026015	1.4209
UAE	Dirham	0.206049	0.272294	14.8727
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.321500	72.1803
Argentina	Peso	0.258045	0.341006	18.6257
Brazil	Real	0.293301	0.387597	21.1705
Denmark	Kroner	0.134391	0.177598	9.7004
India	Rupee	0.017352	0.022931	1.2525
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199162	0.263193	14.3756
Mexico	New Peso	0.068237	0.090175	4.9254
New Zealand	Dollar	0.548862	0.725321	39.6170
Norway	Kroner	0.121350	0.160364	8.7591
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012752	0.016852	0.9205
South Africa	Rand	0.130520	0.172482	9.4210
Korea	Won	0.000754	0.000997	0.0545
Sweden	Kroner	0.110089	0.145482	7.9462
Syria	Pound	0.014577	0.019264	1.0522
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024269	0.032072	1.7518
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000396	0.000522	0.0285

Waterfront posts profit in '04, cuts losing streak

By Doris C. Dumlao

AFTER four years of heavy losses, local hotel chain operator Waterfront Philippines Inc. (WPI) returned to profitability last year on the back of increasing tourist arrivals and tighter cost controls.

WPI, owned by the Gatchalian family, chalked up P4 million in net profit in 2004 and has set an ambitious income target of P117.4 million this year, officials said yesterday.

The company incurred a net loss of P203.9 million in 2003, its fourth straight year of losses.

Its fortunes changed last year, however, with unaudited financial records showing a 9-percent growth in company revenues to P960 million.

The Waterfront group also posted a 17-percent increase in gross operating profit, ending 2004 with P431 million.

Total room revenues last year increased 13 percent from the previous year to P343 million, while food and beverage receipts increased 15 percent to P354 million.

Waterfront's hotel facility in Cebu City contributed 68 percent of the total revenue, while its Mactan and Davao properties contributed 21 percent and 11 percent, respectively.

Company officials attributed the rise in its revenues to the increase in tourist arrivals, strong domestic consumption in its food and beverage outlets, and reduction in operating expenses.

Rex Gatchalian, executive vice president for hotel operations, also said ongoing facilities and service upgrades contributed heavily to the influx of new patrons and repeat guests.

Last year, WPI renovated facilities in its three hotels.

In its flagship 567-room hotel in Cebu City, the company opened a new state-of-the-art business center, bakeshop and lobby lounge.

In its smaller hotel properties, the company upgraded lobby facilities and function rooms.

For 2005, the company plans to tap new revenue sources throughout its hotels, by opening Japanese restaurants in its hotels, operating a commissary-type kitchen for cakes and pastries that can service its hotels and other institutions, and even operating a catering subsidiary.

WPI operates 1500 hotel rooms across the country.

In Luzon, it owns and operates the Manila Pavilion Hotel; in the Visayas, the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino and the Waterfront Airport Hotel and Casino Mactan, and in Mindanao, the Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao.

It currently employs 1,360 regular staff and runs the country's second largest convention facility, the Cebu International Convention Center.

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CARMONA BONDS
Report on the Financial Condition of the Trust Fund
As of December 31, 2004

Collections for 2004		
Sale of Bonds	P	150,000,000.00
Total Interest earned		3,539,784.41
Total Funds Available		153, 539,784.41
Less: Total Disbursement for 2004		
From Main Account		98,070,937.81
From Sinking Fund		9,167,110.00
Funds Available (12-31-04)	P	46,301,736.60

Certified Correct:
PVP MANUEL S. BANAYAD
Head, DBP-Trust Services

Noted:
HON. DAHLIA A. LOYOLA
Mayor, Municipality of Carmona

SEC approves incorporation of APC unit

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the incorporation by APC Group Inc. of its oil and gas exploration unit, Aragorn Power and Energy Corp.

This was disclosed by APC, a unit of leisure estate developer Belle Corp., to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

Aragorn was recently awarded a petroleum exploration permit in Cagayan Valley, making it the first Filipino-owned exploration firm to get a contract since 1998.

The area covered by the service contract in Cagayan Valley spans 748,000 hectares.

The Cagayan Valley basin is considered to have good mineral prospects.

PNOC Exploration Corp. operates a gas field in the area that fuels a three-megawatt power plant.

The group plans to spend around $6 million over the seven-year term of the Cagayan Valley service contract.

The project involves exploration and drilling of one well within the first two years, and four more wells in the next five years.

APC Group, formerly known as Asian Petroleum Corp., has been involved in oil exploration in Lingayen Gulf, Mindoro Straits and offshore Mindanao, as well as in an offshore area near the Bongkot Field in Thailand.

The company was incorporated in 1993 to engage in oil and gas exploration and development in the Philippines.

It is 46.6 percent owned by Belle Corp.

It has other investments in telecommunications, a cement project and manpower outsourcing businesses.

-APC has put cash-strapped telecommunications unit Philippine Global Communications Inc. on the auction block to focus on oil, gas and coal exploration, which is seen to be the economy's new growth driver.

Doris C. Dumlao

Kogas to invest in Malampaya

SEOUL—A consortium led by Korea Gas Corp. (Kogas) is set to buy a stake in the $4.5-billion Malampaya gas field project, providing much-needed funds for the Philippine government.

Kogas, the world's largest corporate buyer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), is part of a South Korean consortium selected by Manila last year as the preferred bidder to buy the stake from the Philippines National Oil Co Exploration Corp. (PNOC-EC).

Malampaya, in which oil giants Royal/Dutch Shell and ChevronTexaco Corp. each own a 45-percent stake, is the Philippines' biggest private sector investment project, and produces the bulk of the nation's natural gas supplies, feed Philippine power plants.

The Philippine government is selling the stake to raise funds to help reduce its $3.6 billion annual budget deficit.

Kogas revealed the plan in a public filing to the Korea Stock Exchange after the project's investors and PNOC-EC reached a deal on the sale, a Kogas official said.

Kogas plans to sign a final contract in mid-March.

Kogas will take 30 percent of the 4.9 percent stake, partner LG International Corp. will take 35 percent stake, Daesung Industrial Co. Ltd. 20 percent, and Seoul City Gas 15 percent, the company said.

Located off the western island of Palawan, the Malampaya field has recoverable reserves of 2.5 trillion cubic feet (70.8 billion cubic metres) of gas and 85 million barrels of condensate.

At present, it fuels three power stations with a combined capacity of 2,700 megawatts.

The project, operated by Shell Philippines Exploration BV, was contracted to produce gas between 2001-2022, but this could be extended for another 15 years if more reserves are found, Kogas said.

Reuters

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Fed says US rates to rise to keep inflation stable

WASHINGTON—The US Federal Reserve concluded at its last meeting on Feb. 1-2 that interest rates likely remained too low to keep inflation stable and held open the possibility of altering the pace of future increases, minutes of the meeting issued on Wednesday showed.

On balance, the central bank's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee felt its policy of pushing rates up would keep inflation in check but left no doubt it intended to keep on raising them.

"The real federal funds rate was generally seen as remaining below levels that might reasonably be associated with maintaining a stable inflation rate over the medium term," the minutes of the Fed's meeting said.

At the end of that meeting, the Fed lifted its trend-setting federal funds rate for a sixth successive time by a quarter percentage point to 2.5 percent.

Some market participants have been watching for a sign that the Fed might pause in its current cycle of rate rises that are aimed at getting the fed funds rate to a "neutral" level that neither hinders growth nor fosters inflation.

But the minutes kept that issue ambiguous, leaving room for the Fed to pause or to speed up rate rises as it saw fit.

"The pace of policy moves at upcoming meetings ... would depend on incoming data," the Fed said.

On balance and despite some signs of more price pressure and a greater ability among companies to pass on costs, the Fed appeared confident it will able to keep inflation in check.

"Despite some pick-up in costs, participants thought that the rate of core inflation likely would remain low and stable, assuming further removal of policy accommodation," it said.

Separately, the president of the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, Jack Guynn, told a Rotary Club meeting on Wednesday that interest rates remain "accommodative" and should rise.

"In my opinion, the present fed funds rate is still accommodative, and with an economic expansion that now seems to be well established, I believe the FOMC still has a way to go in recalibrating monetary policy," Guynn said.

Analysts said the Fed minutes indicate a level of concern among Fed policymakers about rising prices but not enough alarm to prompt bigger rate rises soon.

"They pretty much confirm the market outlook that rates are likely to rise at a measured pace," said Omer Esiner, a market analyst for Ruesch International in Washington. "They have also left the door open for a change of that pace if the environment should warrant."

The term "measured" has generally come to be associated with the quarter percentage point moves that the Fed initiated last June after bringing the fed funds rate down to a 46-year low of one percent.

The Fed is on track to hike the fed funds rate to a neutral level widely seen as somewhere between 3 and 5 percent.

In the minutes, the Fed cited several factors that could cause "an upward skew in the distribution of inflation outcomes" like an "appreciable" further fall in the dollar's value or lower rates of productivity, or output per worker: "Already some participants were hearing anecdotal reports from firms of an increased ability to pass cost increases through to product prices, perhaps because of increasing confidence in the outlook for the economic expansion."

One unidentified FOMC participant thought that national economic output might be running "at or close to potential" already, which would imply increased inflation risk.

"It seems pretty clear that all the concern right now is on the upside risk to inflation, from the dollar and from anecdotal reports of higher price pressures," said economist John Shin of Lehman Brothers in New York.

The Fed cited big US trade imbalances as a contributor to economic uncertainty and was unsure about the Bush administration's commitment to rein in record budget deficits.

"The extent to which the federal budget deficit would decline over coming years was an open question," the minutes said.

With US economic growth outstripping that of its major trade partners, it was also doubtful that trade deficits can be reduced, they added. *Reuters*

Oil prices climb above $51 a barrel

SINGAPORE—Oil prices rose further above $51 a barrel in Asian trade Thursday as speculative trading offset the impact of comments from Opec's president that the cartel may increase production, dealers said.

World oil prices cooled Wednesday in New York as the president of Opec hinted at a possible output hike amid a cold snap in the northern hemisphere.

"If prices continue to increase, there will be a reaction from Opec to help reduce these prices as it did throughout 2004," Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries president and Kuwaiti Energy Minister Sheikh Ahmad Fahd al-Sabah said Wednesday.

Victor Shum, an analyst at energy consultancy firm Purvin and Gertz, attributed Thursday's rise to speculators.

The dollar steadied Wednesday after South Korea's central bank denied it planned to shed its dollar assets, saying there had been "misunderstanding" over its previous day's statement.

South Korea has the world's fourth largest dollar reserves and speculation over its holdings of the US currency highlighted concerns in other Asian countries over their huge exposure to the US unit.

World oil prices rose to three-month highs on Tuesday on the back of a cold snap in the northern hemisphere.

Prices would remain high over the next couple of weeks before an Opec meeting on March 16, with the market continuing to be on edge, Shum said. *AFP*

A SHOPPER looks at the colorful key chains and soft toys on display for sales at a shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia's 2005 gross domestic product growth will be slower than in 2004 due to a slowdown in the world economy, a junior minister said. AP

Correct trade imbalances, nations urged

NEW YORK—The head of the International Monetary Fund on Wednesday urged the world's richest nations to take "deliberate" steps to fix global economic imbalances, including "credible and sustained" efforts by the United States to cut its budget gap.

Still, Rodrigo Rato said he saw some signs of fiscal restraint in the Bush administration's budget proposal for fiscal 2006, which must be approved by Congress.

"Implementation of the administration's proposals will be critical; slippage must be avoided," he said in a speech at New York's Columbia University, in one of the IMF's first comments on the proposed US budget since its release on Feb. 7.

Rato said the United States must put in place policies that will ensure any depreciation in the dollar caused by big US trade gap will not disrupt global markets.

"A convincing and sustained set of policies must be in place to narrow the imbalances, and to signal that any depreciation of the US dollar that might occur, on account of the deficit, will not be disruptive," Rato later told the New York-based Foreign Policy Association.

While Rato pointed to the US deficits as a potential risk to sustained global growth, he also said European and Japanese economies were still underperforming due to lagging reforms.

In the euro zone, he said, more focus was needed to fix distortions in labor markets, including generous retirement schemes and restrictive labor laws. *Reuters*

The 1st INTERNATIONAL
Philippine Marathon
for the
PASIG RIVER
27 FEBRUARY 2005

The four-year old Pasig River Heritage Marathon has turned a new leaf and got better. It has earned international accreditation from the US-based International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) and the Association of International Marathons and Road Races (AIMS) effective January 2005. Thus, it is now known as the *Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River.*

As an international event, the Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River will be included in the official list and schedule of marathons in the world and race results will be internationally recognized and accepted.

The Marathon is held every last Sunday of February to advocate for the rehabilitation of the Pasig River. Since the early 1990s, efforts of rehabilitating this once majestic River has been pushed actively by the government and private sectors such as Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) is the government office mandated to revitalize the Pasig River and the Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. sits as one of its three private sector representatives.

The *Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River* plays a key role in elevating the advocacy for the Pasig River to an international level. The *Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River* will ply the original 42-kilometer course from Fort Santiago in the old city of Manila to the Global City of Fort Bonifacio, making it a tour of the country's historical sites and districts and highlighting the Pasig River by passing 11 out of its 13 bridges.

It is a hybrid of physical prowess, environmental advocacy, and historical and cultural awareness as it seeks to refocus attention to and awaken more concern for the Pasig River's rehabilitation.

This is a project of the Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. for the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

For interested parties and partners, you may call the Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. at telephone numbers 527-6376 / 78 / 79 or email us at cgfi@itextron.com.

Each step closer to a Pasig River

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An advocacy program of the
Clean and Green Foundation, Inc. for the
PASIG RIVER REHABILITATION COMMISSION

"A great challenge has been posed to us Filipinos. The challenge is to reclaim a natural heritage - the PASIG RIVER."

-Mrs. Amelita M. Ramos, Former First Lady
Chairperson, Clean and Green Foundation, Inc.

IAAF representative Dave Cundy (rightmost), hands over the new Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River flag to Mrs. Amelia M. Ramos, Chairperson of CGFI, Fr. Robert Reyes, the running priest and Mr. Ben Silva-Netto (leftmost) Race Director, in the turnover ceremonies of the first ever International Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River.

The Fun Run: Runners participate in the [illegible] Run for the Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River running the 42-kilometer route and distributing flyers to the different barangays.

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Steelmakers rally, but high oil caps gains in Asian markets

SINGAPORE—Asian steelmakers recovered on Thursday from an iron ore price rise shock as investors banked on strong demand from China, but high oil prices offset modest gains in the dollar to keep most Asian stock markets in check.

US oil prices which hit a record high above $55 in October, edged up 0.3 percent to $51.32 a barrel as cold weather in the US Northeast fanned concern over heating oil stocks.

The dollar held gains against the yen after minutes from a Fed meeting reminded markets that the US central bank would need to keep raising interest rates to hold inflation at bay.

But data showing US consumer prices inched up 0.1 percent in January, less than forecasts of a 0.2 percent rise, helped soothe worries about inflation and lifted the Dow Jones index up 0.59 percent.

High oil prices and worries over their impact on corporate profits capped gains in Japanese shares, with the Nikkei index rising 0.2 percent to 11,517.03 in the morning session.

South Korea was the star performer among major Asian bourses as US inflation concerns eased, with its benchmark index rising 1.4 percent, helped by a 0.6-percent gain in tech heavyweight Samsung Electronics.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan had risen 0.4 percent by 0230 GMT.

Steelmakers rose across the board following sharp falls on Wednesday after Japanese, Chinese and South Korean steel mills accepted price rises in excess of 70 percent for iron ore.

Tokyo steel shares ISTEL rose 1.5 percent, with top steelmaker Nippon Steel up 1.9 percent and second-ranked JFE Holdings Inc. rising 1.2 percent.

Shares rose 0.7 percent in Taiwan, 0.4 percent in Hong Kong and 0.5 percent in Singapore.

The smaller-than-expected rise in US consumer prices helped Asian exporters, with Japan's Honda Motor up one percent.

In South Korea, Hynix Semiconductor jumped 3.5 percent and LG Electronics rose 2 percent. *Reuters*

Wal-Mart CEO counters critics

LOS ANGELES—The head of Wal-Mart Stores Inc. went on the offensive on Wednesday against critics who say the world's largest retailer pays its workers too little and does not provide adequate health benefits.

In a heated speech to California business leaders, Wal-Mart chief executive Lee Scott said labor unions like the United Food and Commercial Workers and higher-priced retailers were operating out of self-interest, not public interest, when they complained about his company.

"There are some who say that Wal-Mart's wages and benefits have some kind of negative impact on wages across the board," Scott said at a luncheon sponsored by Town Hall Los Angeles.

"We believe that's just wrong—just dead wrong."

Scott's comments come as Bentonville, Arkansas-based Wal-Mart is in the midst of a national advertising campaign to burnish an image tarnished by claims of worker discrimination and anti-union practices.

Public resistance to Wal-Mart's expansion has been particularly strong in California, where the retailer's campaign to improve its image began last year.

Wal-Mart has plans to open 25 new stores in California, Scott said, arguing they will help lower grocery prices statewide by forcing supermarket chains with union employees to compete with them.

Scott also defended Wal-Mart's wage practices, saying it is right to pay its workers less than those at other big US companies such as Ford Motor Co.

"A single Ford worker might operate dozens of computer-controlled robots that assemble a car," Scott said.

"In a Wal-Mart store, hundreds of associates are helping customers find what they need and check out fast."

He also addressed claims that Wal-Mart does not offer adequate health benefits to its employees, saying premiums for workers, including part-timers, start at under $40 a month for individuals and under $155 a month for families.

Scott added, however, that both the government and individual consumers—not just employers—should play a role in improving health care coverage options.

Scott defended buying cheap goods from places like Bangladesh where factory workers earn very little, one of the ways Wal-Mart is able to keep its prices so low. *Reuters*

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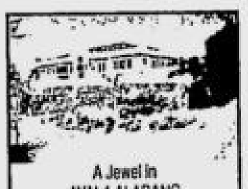

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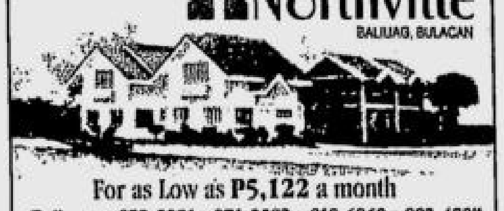

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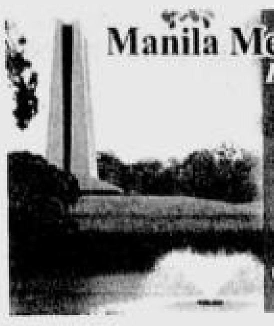

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TIBURCIO T. VILLANUEVA

of La Paz, Iloilo City

Peacefully joined the Lord
on February 22, 2005 at the age of 75.

His son **Kim** and wife **Lea**; his loving grandchildren **Gusty** and **Chanel**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on February 26, 2005, at 10:00 AM at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

"In peace I shall both lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord make me secure..." – **Psalm 4:9**

ROGELIO G. ONG

January 10, 1949 – February 21, 2005

His loving mother **Ana**; brothers **Francisco Jr.-Marina & Rodolfo-Margaret**; sisters **Taciana, Rosita, Susana-Mike, Yolanda (†), Marilyn-Cesar & Maribeth-Steve**; uncles & nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Turbo Trading, Poblacion 2, Gerona, Tarlac. Interment at the Gerona Cemetery will follow at 9 a.m. after the 8 a.m. Necrological Mass at St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish Church on March 2, 2005.

LOLITA SEVILLA DELMO

"Lita / Lolit"

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on February 22, 2005 at the age of 67.

Her loving children **Babylet & Giovani, Grace & Henry, Boyet & Claire, Edwin & Emily, Eric & Lani, Ellen & Josue, Leny & Richard** and **Emma**; grandchildren; brothers & sister and relatives request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her remains lie in state at National Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Dao St., Makati City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 27, 2005 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

The Board of Trustees,
Officers and Staff of

SMALL BUSINESS GUARANTEE AND FINANCE CORPORATION
(SBGFC)

condole with the family of

MS. ZORAYDA AMELIA C. ALONZO
Chair & CEO, SBGFC
and DTI Undersecretary for SME Development

whose father,

ENGR. PABLO M. CAPISTRANO

Former President, Philippine Society of Mining & Metallurgical Engineers
Former President, Philippine Geological Society
Former Member, Board of Examiners for Mining Engineering

died in the Grace of our Lord and joined his beloved wife, Laura
on February 22, 2005 at the age of 91.

We request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul. His body lies in state at Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills. He will make a final visit to his home in Marungko, Angat, Bulacan on Saturday, February 26, 2005, where a 10:00 a.m. Mass will be held at the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

Interment will be on the same day, Saturday, after the 4:00 p.m. Funeral Mass at the Garden of Salvation, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

We design OBITUARIES for free.

CLASSIFIEDS

Davao City officials laud NFA for ensuring food security

THE LOCAL government officials of Davao recently lauded the National Food Authority for its efforts in ensuring food security and rice price stability in the city. In a two-page resolution signed during the 24th regular session of the Davao Council, the city officials recognized the NFA for successfully providing the rice requirement of the city resulting in stable prices of the staple and other basic food commodities in the area. The council also commended the NFA for assuring accessibility and availability of good quality rice sold at a subsidized price of P16 per kilogram through its accredited rice outlets in major and minor markets in Davao. The council further cited that the NFA office in Davao immediately responded to the request of the city council for the agency to increase the rice allocations of accredited outlets here, from 15 to at least 30 bags per week during the lean months, to augment the rice needs of the residents in the rice deficit areas.

PMAP seminars

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a seminar on Essentials of Human Resource Management which will be held on Feb. 21 to 24. Registration fee is P8,500 for PMAP Members and P10,000 for Non PMAP Members. The program entitled Principles and Techniques in Instructional Design is scheduled on Feb. 21 to 22. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP Members and P7,100 for Non PMAP Center. A two-day workshop on Competency Based Interviewing Techniques is scheduled on Feb. 23 to 24. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP Members and P7,100 for Non PMAP Members. All programs will be held at PMAP Center in Mandaluyong City. For reservations, please contact The Human Resource Management Development Center at telephone numbers 726-1581; 726-1588 or 726-1532; email address: maylene.gatdula@pmap.org.ph or you may visit the website: www.pmap.org.ph

NFA provides rice for victims of Sulu conflict

AS CLASHES between government forces and Moro National Liberation Front rebels continue, the National Food Authority in Jolo, Sulu has also continuously been providing rice for the affected civilians. As of Feb. 14, the NFA had already distributed 500 bags of rice for 1,789 families in the affected towns of Panglima Estino, Kalingalang Caluang, Indanan and Luuk in coordination with the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC). NFA Jolo provincial manager Radzhata Julkanain assures the people of Sulu that the food agency has enough rice stocks to provide the rice needs of residents affected by the conflict. Manager Julkanain said that the NFA is in constant coordination with the local government of Sulu as well as with other agencies such as the DSWD, PNRC, NDCC and non-government organizations (NGOs). For more information on NFA's relief operations in Sulu, please use the NFA Text Program by sending your inquiries, complaints and suggestions to mobile number 0917-6210927.

NOTICE OF CHANGED OF OFFICE ADDRESS

TO ALL VALUED CLIENTS / CUSTOMERS AND SUPPLIERS:

On 01 December 2004 the Board of Investments noted the transfer of **INTERCOCO PHILIPPINES MANUFACTURING CORPORATION (IPMC)** its manufacturing operations from **SAN PABLO CITY** to **BRGY. LAGALAG, TIAONG, QUEZON.** IPMC also changed its contact number to TelFax # (042) 585-6557.

For any inquiries, please contact **Mr. Kwon Chang Ryong**, President.

I.P.M.C.
INTERCOCO PHILIPPINES MANUFACTURING CORP.

JUNIOR PHILIPPINE SOCIETY for TRAINING and DEVELOPMENT
invites
all psychology, human resource, and management students to its 2ND ANNUAL CONVENTION

Jumpstart '05:
Strengthening the Youth's HROD Competencies
February 26, 2005
Golden Bay Hotel, Manila City

Program of Activities

07:30am-08:30am 08:30am-10:30am	Registration Opening Ceremonies *"Building a Career in Human Resource and Organizational Development"* Mr. Eliseo C. Corpus, Jr. *Johnson & Son* Learning Manager for Asia Pacific
10:30am-10:45am 10-45am-12:15pm	Coffee Break Concurrent Sessions One Track 1 – Character Based Competencies *"Life Orientations Method: Aiming for Utmost Productivity of the Youth"* Ms. Gem Zabala Managing Director, *Alexander Consulting Group* Track 2 – Professional-Innovative Competencies *"Unlocking Youth-Trainer's Creativity in Training and Development"* Mr. Jesse Francis N. Rebustillo Classified Ads Division Manager, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*
12:15nn-01:30pm 01:30pm-03:00pm	Lunch Break Concurrent Sessions Two Track 1 – Character Based Competencies *"S.P.A.R.K.L.E. – A Journey Towards Personal Effectiveness"* Mr. Hernan H. Espiritu Consultant, *International Customer Mgt. Sys.* and *2005 PSTD Board Member* Track 2 – Professional-Innovative Competencies *"HR, Luv Ko 'To"* Ms. Evie B. Abraham HRD Head of *Chinatrust Philippines Commercial Bank Corporation*
03:00pm-03:15pm 03:15m-05:00pm	Coffee Break Plenary Session 2 A Research Study Presentation *"The Profile of the Filipino Trainer"* Ms. Ambhika Abella Programs Dev't. Officer, *ATENEO Center for Organization, Research, & Dev't.* *"Holistic Development through Self-Awareness"* Mr. Arthur Luis P. Florentin HR Head of *MERALCO* and *2005 PSTD President*
05:00pm-05:30pm 05:30pm-08:00pm	Mini-Forum for School/Department Heads and Student Organization Advisers Fellowship Night Awarding and Recognition Ceremonies

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jpstd04@yahoogroups.com

PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY
PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN LUZON
164 13th Street, Port Area, Manila
Tel (02) 301-9576 to 82, Fax (02) 301-9579

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

All interested parties are invited to apply for pre-qualification and, if pre-qualified to bid for the provision of

CARGO HANDLING SERVICES
at the following ports:

Port/s	Location	Minimum Paid-Up Capital
1. Port of Sta. Cruz	Marinduque	P 250,000.00
2. Port of Romblon	Romblon	P 500,000.00
3. Port of Poctoy (Odiongan)	Romblon	P 1,000,000.00
4. Port of San Jose	Occidental Mindoro	P 2,000,000.00
5. Port of Cuyo	Cuyo, Palawan	P 500,000.00

Issuance of Pre-qualification documents February 28, 2005
March 1-11, 2005
Submission of Pre-qualification documents March 28, 2005, Not later than 3:00 PM

Pre-qualification documents for each port may be secured upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable amount of P1,100.00 at the Port District of Southern Luzon at the above address. Bid documents shall be issued only to pre-qualified firms upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P5,500.00.

Pre-qualified firms shall be informed of the date and time of Pre-bid Conference and submission and opening of bids in the Notice of Pre-qualification. The venue for all activities shall be at the Port District of Southern Luzon.

The Philippine Port Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereat, waive any defect or informality therein and to accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **HECTOR E. MIOLE**
Port District Manager

(PDI - Feb. 18 & 25, 2005)

American Fund-Raising Expert to Lead 2-day Workshop in La Union

March 11 and 12

Come and learn
- How to get US funding for Philippine projects
- Preparations needed before writing proposals
- Secrets of winning grant proposals

Bring your proposals for comments by speaker

Workshop Leader: John C. Drew, Ph.D.

Internationally known American author, award-winning teacher, lecturer and speaker on grant-writing, 100% success rate in writing Federal Grant Applications.

Location: Oasis Country Resort, Sevilla, Sn. Fdo. City
* Day One — Lectures on how to win grants
* Day Two — Feedback on proposals given

Registration Fee: P2,000 includes 2 lunches, 4 snacks, handouts and certificate. *Seats are limited—reserve early*
Call Lorma Community Development Foundation, Inc.
(Tonettte or Vangie): (072) 700-0000 Loc. 400 email:atejano@lorma.edu.ph

Coron, the next tourism wonderland

CORON, Palawan, stands as one of the regions in the Philippine archipelago anointed with a variety of natural wonders and highly attractive tourist destinations on land and under water. If its potential is fully developed, Coron can contribute significantly in improving and boosting Philippine tourism.

At just barely 140 nautical miles south of Manila (10 hours by Superferry or an hour by plane), local and foreign visitors alike are attracted the whole year round to the enchanting 239 islands and islets comprising the legendary Calamianes group of islands. With 300 breathtaking white sandy beaches, dazzling waterfronts, numerous mountain caves and walls of limestone cliffs, and a wide arena of colorful coral reefs, these islands are showcases of natural and geological wonders, and the perfect staging point for the most enjoyable, exciting and affordable island hopping venture.

The island of Coron itself (Kalis Point) has 10 captivatingly white beaches. South of Coron are three more unspoiled islands with an average land area of 30 hectares: Malcapuya, Banana and Maleroyroy.

The list of beautiful destinations in the Calamianes group of islands is endless. Some of the more notable locations are the dazzling "Los Siete Pecados", or the Seven Rock Islands, the popular Makinit Hot Spring Resort, and the fantastic seven lagoons nestled on top of Coron Islands, which include Lake Kayangan, Lake Barracuda and Lake Tanguige.

Tapyas Mountain Resort, 2,000 feet above sea level, offers a spectacular view of Coron harbor. The way up is paved by 717 winding concrete steps.

Scuba divers can have more than their fill of undersea wonders here. History has enriched the narrow passages of Sangat, Gutob, Culion and Bo. Concepcion, as the bitter conflict between American and Japanese forces in World War II has made these sites shallow graveyards of 36 Japanese naval vessels.

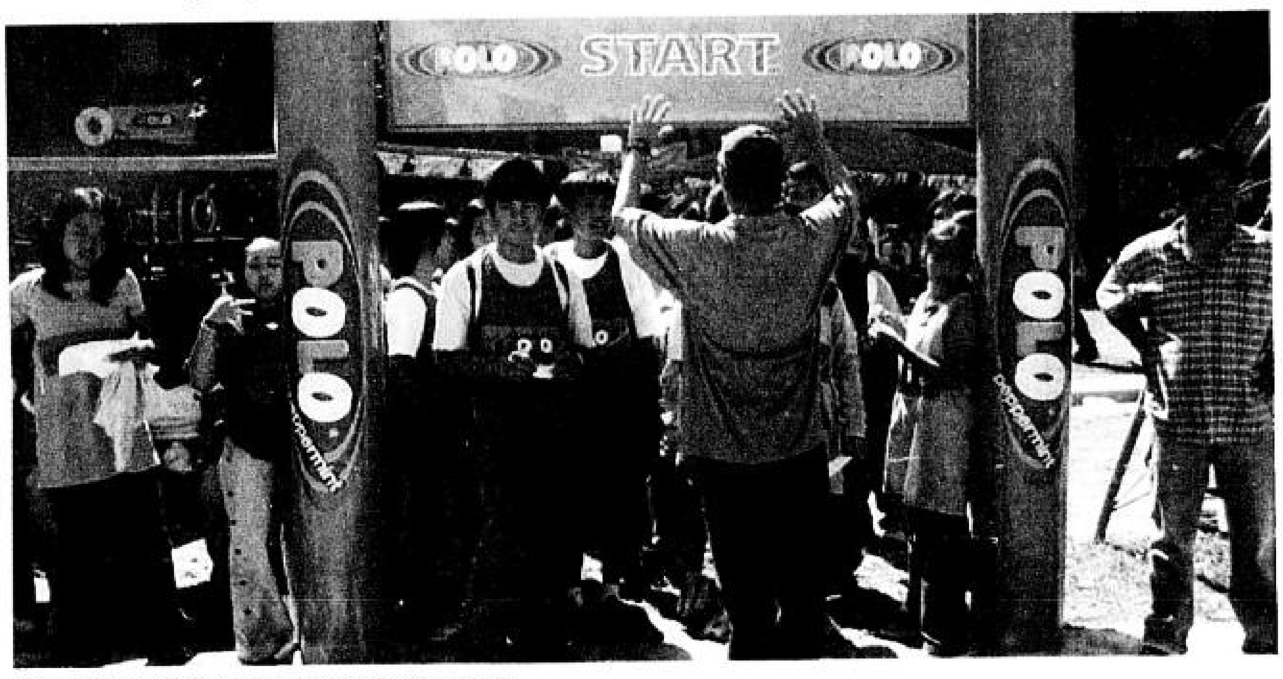
With all these natural and man-made wonders, the stage is set for Coron to make its presence felt in local and global tourism. The Develop Coron Movement, the proponents of which include Coron's municipal officials and the members of the newly organized Palawan Wonder Tours Inc, aim to put Coron on the tourism map of the world by hosting major tourism events on the islands and conducting regular "packaged" tours.

In conjunction with these tourism programs, Palawan Wonder Tours, in coordination with Coron Mayor Marjo T. Reyes and the local government, is planning the celebration of the first Coron grand island-hopping festival and scuba diving activities during the last week of March.

The grand island-hopping festival and the other upcoming tourism projects for Coron, according to Palawan Wonder Tours Inc president Tess Dono, is fully supported by Palawan Gov. Joel T. Reyes, Vice Governor Dave Ponce de Leon and members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Palawan.

Palawan Wonder Tours now offers great package tours for groups, students, families, and nature lovers and trekkers for summer 2005. The package tours are arranged in a way that maximizes the itinerary so visitors could see and experience all the best Coron can offer in a weekend escapade. Departure from Manila starts on a Friday evening via Superferry, and the trip back home from Coron starts Sunday evening, arriving in Manila on Monday, 7 a.m.

To learn more about Palawan Wonder Tour's packaged tours, call Teresa Dono at 995-0039 or 0919-2524685.



POLO MINT MANIA NOW ROLLING

Fun, play, and challenges-all rolled into one. Polo, the mint with the hole, goes around the Philippines to stage the '2005 Polo Mint Mania!' Visiting 30 schools nationwide, Polo Mint Mania kicked off January. Cool activities are lined-up for young, hip and highly active high school and college students whose schools are selected to participate in the run. The 'Polo Mint Dash Competition' is a true test of sense, skill and speed. A dash of creativity and skill is needed in the 'Dress-up Your Tambayan Contest'. Lastly, 'Polo Mint Hoop' entices individuals with a knack in shooting. Polo Mint Mania 2005 is sponsored by Nestlé Philippines, the makers of Polo.

BOSS, Globe Platinum mount Quezon relief mission

ONE OF the advantages of leading a privileged life is having the ability to share one's blessings and give something back to the community.

Known equally for their passion for riding and their humanitarian efforts, the BMW Owners Society of Saferiders (BOSS) heeded the widespread cry for support and, in cooperation with official telecom partner Globe Platinum and the Luzon Motorcycle Federation Inc, embarked on its own relief mission to the typhoon-ravaged areas in Quezon.

"It has always been one of BOSS's mandates to spread goodwill across the nation through touring missions that provide assistance to our less-fortunate countrymen," says Francis Rivera, overall coordinator of the BOSS Mercy Mission and Globe Platinum subscriber. "In light of recent events, we have decided to concentrate our efforts on providing food, clothing and medicine to the victims of typhoon Winnie."

The motorcycle club identified barangays Libyo and Buzin as two of the hardest hit barangays on the Infanta coastline. After soliciting donations from its members and corporate partners, the goods were airlifted via helicopter to Infanta. BOSS members overseeing the relief operations witnessed for themselves the massive devastation left in the wake of the typhoon. Strong winds and rains made navigating difficult and all open spaces were covered with mud and flood waters, leaving them no choice but to land on the shoreline, which was littered with washed out houses and logging debris.

While the goods were unloaded, hundreds of displaced residents clamored to get their share of the relief package. To accommodate the need for more basic goods, BOSS undertook two additional flights, bringing more food and water to the thankful residents.

As official telecom partner of BOSS, Globe Platinum is privileged to be a part of the bike club's noteworthy outreach programs. The exclusive mobile brand has likewise been involved in fundraiser events and galas for charitable institutions such as the Virlanie Foundation and St. Rita Orphanage. Indeed, the Globe Platinum lifestyle goes beyond first-class services and exclusive events. Existing Globe subscribers with a minimum monthly usage of P4,000 (excluding taxes and adjustments) for the last 12 months and with good credit standing are qualified for Globe Platinum membership, as are new subscribers of a G-Plan or fully consumable G-Flex Plan at P5,000, P7,000, or P10,000. Special privileges include consumable roaming and IDD rates for all subscribers. Subscribe to Globe Platinum now and take part in a meaningful mobile experience.

RESIDENTS of barangays Libyo and Buzin line up for their share of the relief goods.

PLANNING the BOSS Mercy Mission.

NEW DBP DIRECTOR

Jose Maria Rufino takes his oath of office as a new member of the board of directors of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) before Chair Vitaliano Nañagas as president and CEO Reynaldo David looks on. Rufino was recently appointed to the post by President Gloria M. Arroyo. Prior to his appointment, Rufino was presidential liaison officer for political affairs. He was also chair and CEO of Value Capital Management Corp and chair of Urdec Holding Corp. He was also administrator and vice chair of the Livelihood Corp, chair of Northern Foods Corp, vice chair and managing director of the Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises, and director of the Philippine National Bank Venture Capital Corp. An active socio-civic leader, he has affiliations with the Philippine Jaycees, Community Development and Economic Foundation, Center for Christian-Muslim Democracy, National Movement of Young Legislators Foundation, and Kabuhayan Sagot sa Kahirapan Movement. Rufino has degrees in Political Science and History from Lincoln University in San Francisco, California, and a degree in Human Relations and Organizational Behavior from the University of San Francisco. He is married to the former Concepcion Gueco, with whom he has two sons.

HDL-C: The heart protector

AN INCREASED level of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C), or good cholesterol, is a well-established protective factor against coronary heart disease (CHD).

"Elevated HDL-C indicates an increased capacity of the body to remove cholesterol from tissues, particularly from the arterial wall," said Dr. Cesare Sirtori, professor of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Milan, Italy.

Sirtori said an elevated HDL-C also produces an anti-inflammatory effect. This is because HDL-C efficiently inhibits monocyte (germ-eating white blood cells) recruitment.

The reverse cholesterol transport (RCT) is another notable protective function of HDL-C. In this process, HDL-C transports cholesterol from the blood and artery walls to the liver. Inside the liver, cholesterol is transformed into bile (digestive juice) that aids in digestion or excreted in the body. This reduces the amount of cholesterol in the body and eventually decreases CHD risk.

Several studies have shown elevated HDL-C level reduces CHD risk. The HDL-Atherosclerosis Treatment Study (HATS) involved 160 patients with CHD, low HDL-C (average of 31 mg/dL) and normal serum LDL (average of 125 mg/dL). After the combination therapy of nicotinic acid and statin was given, it significantly decreased the LDL-C level by 42 percent and a 26-percent increase of HDL-C level. The study also showed that the reversible relationship of LDL-C and HDL-C level reduced CHD risk from 60 to 90 percent.

Coronary heart disease continues to be a major burden to millions of people worldwide. The World Health Organization estimates that 17 million people are at risk of CHD.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the Philippines. In 1998, more than 55,000 Filipinos succumbed to heart attacks and other related coronary deaths.

The increase in the incidence of heart disease is linked to a sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy diet, smoking and alcohol drinking.

Bits Clips

'Sandaang Bahay sa Bawat Munisipyo'

ACUÑA

BY STARTING to build some 100 social housing units for each city and municipality of the country every year, local government units will have contributed to easing the country's homelessness. Interior and Local Government Secretary Angelo T. Reyes urges governors and mayors to support and join the "Sandaang Bahay sa Bawat Munisipyo" project. Avelina P. Acuña, vice president internal affairs of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba), said the Creba Social Housing Foundation Inc (CSHFI) will hold a workshop for LGU officials on the details of the "10 Easy Steps" of the CSHFI initial "Sandaang Bahay sa Bawat Munisipyo" housing project for Regions 1, 2 and 3 at the Leisure Coast Resort in Dagupan City, Pangasinan, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. today. Creba is the country's largest and oldest industry organization.

Hen Lin launches card promo

HEN LIN, a 100-percent Filipino-owned fast food chain that serves traditional and authentic Asian specialties, recently launched its 2 Food Trip Card promo for regular patrons of its dine-in outlets. The Food Trip Card can be availed of for every single receipt, minimum food purchase worth P150. Upon completion of five stamps, the customer will be entitled to three orders of siomai for free. This free item is not convertible to cash or discount. Promo is valid for both dine-in and take-out orders, and valid until Feb. 28. This promo is available at all Hen Lin outlets nationwide.

2nd confab of Registrars Circle

THE REGISTRARS Circle of the Philippines, in cooperation with the Asian Psychological Services and Assessment Corp (Apsa), holds its 2nd Annual Convention on Feb. 25 and 26 at the Heritage Hotel, Pasay City, Metro Manila. The theme for this year's convention is "Re-engineering the Registrar's Role in Response to the Global Education Needs of the 21st Century". The convention aims to present and discuss relevant issues prevailing in the registration and to strengthen the roles of the registrars in the academe. There will be concurrent sessions on Admission Issues, Reports, Student Activities and other related issues for Basic Education and Collegiate Level on the second day. For more details, call Apsa at 525-7238, 525-7277 or 525-7336 and look for Ciel, Teng, Nette or Coy.

ProductFILES

BTB: All-natural food for dogs, cats

back to basics
back to basics
back to basics

BACK TO BASICS food for dogs and cats is formulated to be the highest quality pet food. Wholesome human grade ingredients are used, preserving nature's goodness. It is antibiotic and hormone-free and slow cooked to retain goodness.

BTB comes in Chicken and Pork Formula for Dogs and Chicken Formula for Cats. It is highly digestible and palatable. Chicken is an excellent source of protein, amino acids, and vitamins. Pork is a lean source of high-quality protein, and its leanness enables BTB's makers to add the fats in a form that is healthier for your dog. Furthermore, it is loaded with vitamins and minerals such as zinc and iron.

Back to Basics is the best-selling holistic food in Malaysia, and is also available in Hong Kong, Korea, and Singapore. A regular diet of BTB will make your pet be visibly fit, have healthier energy levels and a shinier coat with a regular diet of Back to Basics. BTB is now available in pet shops in Manila. For more information, call Apogee Marketing at 314-6858.

Multi-Business Center Philippines: Help for start-ups

FIRST, the good news: it is true that the call-enter, telecommunications and software industries are currently enjoying growth. Now, the bad news: other industries are not growing as fast. In these other slow-growth, non-growth and contracting industries, the trend is grim: downsizing, early retirement programs and hiring freezes.

It's no wonder, then, that more people are turning to entrepreneurship in light of the economic situation. But while many would-be moguls have plenty of guts, brains and ideas, most are short on cash for capital expenditures. This is where business centers come in. Business centers offer the entrepreneur the physical amenities required for efficient business operations-at a fraction of the cost of a "stand alone" office. In a business center, the fixed costs of office operations are shared by all tenants, thus creating significantly lower monthly expenses for each tenant.

One business center doing its share in encouraging entrepreneurship in Metro Manila is Multi-Business Center Philippines Inc, the pioneer business center in the country, according to its founder and managing director Roberto "Bobby" de la Paz. Founded in 1978, MBCPI started out with one secretary and one messenger in a 45-square meter space in a condominium on Perea Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City.

"The Makati business district was new then. Everybody wanted to be in Makati," says De la Paz, explaining his choice of location. In 1994, the center moved to its present, 650-square meter space at the Banco de Oro Plaza on Paseo de Roxas.

MBCPI offers two types of packages: the Office Package and the Business Identity Package (BIP). The Office Package is geared for start-ups that require a fully furnished executive room or a modular unit on a monthly rate that covers lease of space, air conditioning, electricity, cleaning services, use of telephone and fax machine. The Business Identity Package (BIP) allows access to basic services such as use of a business address, telephone and fax number and the PO Box address.

Meeting rooms, a 12-seater conference room, e-mail, long distance communications services, postage/courier services, and assistance in business incorporation, licensing, legal and account work are also available for clients. Over-the-counter services include photocopying, computer and electric typewriter rental, and the use of fax machines.

Traveling businessmen and executives representing out-of-town companies and multinationals needing temporary office space also benefit from serviced accommodations. In the early 1990s, MBCPI had Krupp International, Germany's oldest and largest conglomerate, which transferred regional offices from Hong Kong to the Philippines; Consist International; and the American Soybean Association as clients. At present, MBCPI houses the local offices of, among others, foreign corporations: Giosecke & Devrient Asia Pte, Ltd., a German company; RTZ Associates, an American IT outsoure company; Intergraph Process & Building Solutions Philippines Inc, a Singaporean entity; Silverlake System Inc, a Malaysian corporation; and El-Mick Enterprises Inc, an Australian consultancy firm. The rest of MBCPI's subscribers are either traders, indenters, expatriates, sales specialists, and professionals.

With the Internet creating "virtual offices", and personal digital assistants (PDAs), voice mail and the ubiquitous mobile phone taking over the jobs of receptionists and secretaries, the natural question that pops up is: Does one really need an office in a good address? De la Paz has a quick and ready response: "An entrepreneur trying to win clients needs to project stability and continuity. He needs to be in a prestigious address to create a good image. Anyone can set up shop in his house, but an office in a respectable business district creates a special image. And in today's business game, what the client perceives spells the difference between success and failure."

Breaking barriers between people and technology

ACER'S brand values focuses on developing products and services that truly answer to customers' need and want. Hence, Acer's Value Labs have developed an Empowering Key (eKey) that enables users to access frequently used functions conveniently.

Pressing the eKey will launch the eManager, a user-friendly interface that appears on the screen, consisting of three main settings: ePowerManagement, eSetting and ePresentation.

EPowerManagement is an efficient control panel for setting up different power modes on user's need. Using the most appropriate power management setting will allow users to maximize their notebook battery life. There are five default modes pre-defined for user's convenience: an AC plug-in mode and four DC battery modes including Entertainment, Presentation, Word Processing and maximum battery life.

ESetting integrates four common system settings: display devices, boot options, system information and security preference. Users can check the current notebook settings and make necessary adjustments with ease.

EPresentation selects the most appropriate resolution for the notebook while it connects to a projector. ePresentation ensures that the image projected is of the clearest and brightest quality right from the start. There are two popular resolutions: 1024x768 and 800x600 pixels.

Acer's eKey and eManager help users of all technical levels of understanding interact with their notebooks and also mark another step forward in its commitment to empower people through technology.

The eKey, a pioneering innovation from Acer, can be found in its new, sleek and elegantly designed TravelMate 3200/4000 series and Aspire 1684. Catch these fresh and sophisticated units at your favorite computer stores.

NESTLÉ SIGNS 3 NEW CBAS

The management of Nestlé Philippines Ice Cream (ICD) recently signed three new collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) for its daily paid employees, monthly paid employees and sales force. The signing was held at the Country Waffles Restaurant in Annapolis Street, Greenhills. Settled way ahead of the old CBA's expiration date, the new CBAs will be effective Feb. 1 to Jan. 31, 2008. Nestlé president and CEO Salvador Pigem seals the pact with Nestlé ICD daily paid union president Renato Portajada.

Cool and clean chill out fun with C2 Green Tea

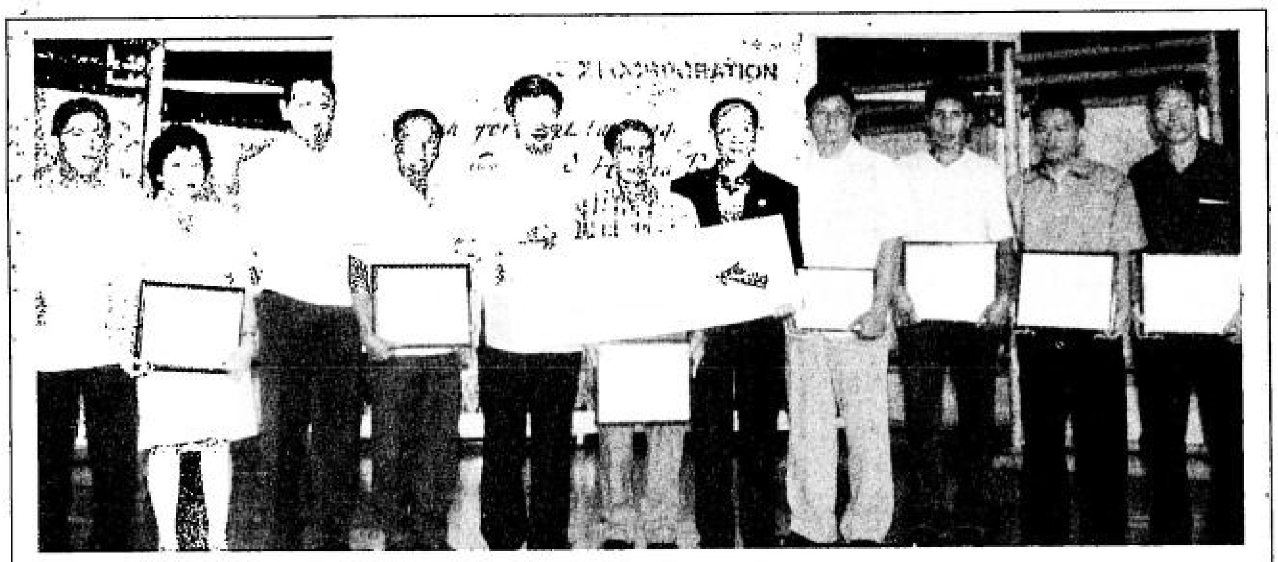
EXPECT all-out excitement and chill out fun as C2 Green Tea hits your favorite gimmick spots for a series of bar tours. The vibrant C2 Squad makes its rounds to select bars and restaurants to spot the lucky C2 Guy and Girl of the night.

Be ready to take part in C2 Guess the Flavor game, which will gauge how well you know the different flavors of C2 Green Tea. Guess all five flavors correctly and you will get a raffle ticket for the "Try C2, Fly for Two!" raffle promo (The C2 Green Tea Boracay Chill Out Experience). Every purchase of C2 Green Tea also corresponds to a raffle ticket and the chance to win the grand prize: a trip to Boracay for two.

The fun began Feb 18 when the C2 Squad took on Eastwood City and visited hotspots like Something Fishy, Cable Car and Blu Onion Bar and invaded Greenbelt the next night. Watch out for the C2 Squad as they make their way to Metrowalk on Feb. 25, return to Greenbelt on March 18 and back to Metrowalk on March 19. So be there as C2 Green Tea transforms your typical weekend gimmick into one sensational fete.

Free Happy Meal

GET SMART Kid Pre-Paid at McDonald's outlets and get a free Burger McDo Happy Meal. Just present your Free Happy Meal Stub. Each purchase of a Smart Kid Pre-Paid entitles a customer to one Burger McDo Happy Meal stub. Customers can claim as many Free Happy Meals as long as stubs are presented. So if you buy two Smart Kid Pre-Paid for your children, both your kids can have a Happy Meal for free. Customers may claim their free Happy Meals instantly or on their next visit at any McDonald's outlet. Offer is good up to Feb. 25. Customers who purchase a Smart Kid Pre-Paid at McDonald's outlets today get a raffle coupon. Fill out the coupons completely, drop in raffle boxes and get a chance to win a free holiday party for your child. Raffle draw is on March 4. Birthday Party Gift Certificates worth P5,000 can be claimed through Smart.



OUTSTANDING SL-8H HYBRID RICE FARMERS

Winners of the 'Search for Outstanding SL-8H Hybrid Rice Farmers' were recently awarded during the International Year of the Rice Festival and Farmers at the Philippine Trade Training Center. This event was attended by delegates and rice experts from all over the world and by professor Yuan Long Ping, father of the Hybrid Rice. Shown, from left, are Dr. Frisco Malabanan, Purificacion Perez, 3rd prize, Dr. Leocadio Sebastian, Antonio Villanueva, 2nd prize, Henry Lim Bon Liong, Amador Na-oy, professor Yuan Long Ping, Pablito dela Fuente, 3rd prize, Eduardo Espinosa, 4th prize, William Caceres, represnting 5th prize winner Valente Yap.

UAAP CHAMPS CELEBRATE AT SHAKEY'S

Members of UAAP champions De La Salle University (standing at the back, from left) Jerwin Gaco, Jun Cabatu, PJ Walsham and JR Aquino celebrate their victory with Shakey's staff (front row, from left) Rommel Ng, Annie Manzano, Bing Nepomuceno, and Mariella de Leon. Shakey's is gearing up for its 30th anniversary by continuing to give great food, great value, and great service because 'Nothing Shakes Like Shakey's'. For those who would rather stay in than eat out, a Shakey's meal is just a phone call away. Dial 533-8000.

AIM ME SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE AWARDEE

William Go (right) graduated from AIM with a degree in Masters of Entrepreneurship and was awarded with a Superior Performance. Photo shows him with wife Angie and AIM president Robert de Ocampo.

MEGAWORLD MARKETING COMPANY OF 2004

Property giant Megaworld Corp was conferred the 'Marketing Company of the Year' award by the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) at the recent 25th Agora Awards Night at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Megworld chair and founder Andrew Tan (second from left) receives the award from (from left): PMA director for the Agora Awards/Agora Conference Ma. Aileen Abiva-Sazon, president Joselito Ortega and Edith Dychiao, overall chair of the 25th Agora Awards executive committee and Company of the Year category head. Megaworld, a co-winner with Mercury Drug, was recognized for its marketing innovations that have become industry models.

Spain expo

THE SPANISH Chamber of Commerce (La Camara) is holding the 2nd Spanish Products and Services Expo from Feb. 24 to 27 at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. In partnership with the Spanish Commercial Office, the four-day event features at least 50 Spanish companies with local operations that are looking to expand their respective businesses. TNT International Express and Fairs & More Inc (FMI) will again serve as the official express and logistics company and event manager of the expo, respectively. For inquiries about the expo, interested parties can call the La Camara at 886-7643 or 759-6776, or FMI at 845-1324 or 759-6680.

MTV VJ Hunt

COLT 45 Premium Strong Beer has joined the massive nationwide search for the coolest individuals in the country who can take on the coolest job on the planet-the 2005 MTV VJ Hunt. The hunt brought Colt 45 and MTV to various key cities around the country since the kick-off party Dec. 16 at the Prince of Jaipur at The Fort, Global City. From over 500 aspiring VJs, 16 finalists were chosen-8 guys and 8 girls. The talented 16 are Anna Domingo, Nicole Fonacier, Claire Olivar, Chynna Ortaleza, Rashel Piazza, Gwen Ruals, Veronica Scott, Maggie Wilson, T Arceno, Christian Esteban, Marv Luna, Srdjan Mendoza, Colby Miller, Jon Papworth, Don Puno, and Drew Wolff. To vote for your favorite MTV VJ Hunt finalist, key in VJHUNT<space> FINALIST'S NAME and send to 688 for Smart and Addict Mobile subscribers. Vote online via www.pinoyexchange.com/mtv. Voting period is from Feb. 6 to March 10. The next stop is at the Basement in Eastwood City on Feb. 25.

Operation Bigay Lunas 2005

ON MARCH 1, Mercury Drug celebrates its 60th year by conducting "Operation Bigay Lunas (OBL)" in 60 cities and municipalities nationwide. The OBL is an annual, all-day free consultation and medicine for indigent patients. It aims to serve 120,000 indigents this year. The undertaking is strongly supported by business partners, provincial governors, city and municipal mayors. This is the company's way of thanking its customers who continually patronize and support Mercury Drug. "Operation Bigay Lunas" is part of Mercury Drug's commitment to improve the quality of healthcare in the community.

Life in the Spirit Seminar

BUKLOD ng Pag-Ibig Charismatic Community is inviting everyone to its 55th Catholic Life in the Spirit Seminar on Feb. 26 and 27 at the Buklod ng Pag-Ibig Healing Center, 97 Balete Drive Extension, New Manila, Quezon City. The seminar, open to all Catholics, is offered free by the Community. Seminar is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Well-known speakers invited to give teachings on various topics are: Fr. Domie Guzman, SSP-Spiritual Director of Buklod ng Pag-Ibig.; Fr. Bobby Titco, vice rector of Guadalupe Shrine in Makati; Bro. Ogie Reyes, Bro. Vic Pestano, Bro. Skippy Santos and Sis. Marylou Velez. Sis. Elsa Payumo, head of PR and media ministries, said that application forms are available at the BNP Healing Center, or they can be faxed upon request. Just call 724-7534 and 724-7546.

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NEW MOON AUCTIONEERS

BUSINESS

Gov't bucks call for debt repudiation

By Doris C. Dumlao and Michelle V. Remo

GOVERNMENT economic managers yesterday turned down the proposal of political critics and militant groups to reject some of the country's debts and impose a moratorium on debt servicing.

According to the militants, debt relief was a better alternative to extracting more taxes from the people.

Newly appointed Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima believes that debt repudiation is not a smart way to address the country's fiscal problem.

"I strongly disagree with any talk of debt repudiation," the finance chief said. "We are responsible citizens of the world and we take pride in continuing to honor our sovereign obligations."

In a separate statement, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura also warned of the dire consequences if the country were to default from its obligations.

"It is not necessary ... [the] costs could be higher than the benefits," the BSP chief said. "If we pursue the reforms that the government is seeking, we would reduce our dependence on borrowings."

Buenaventura was referring to the government's efforts to boost revenues through new tax reform measures.

For Purisima, putting the country's fiscal house in order through internal efforts, such as improving tax administration and implementing new revenue-raising measures, is still the better option.

On. Wednesday, Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. filed Senate Bill No. 1928 which sought to establish a "Council for Debt Relief" to review all loan agreements entered into by past and present Philippine governments with the end of securing debt relief for the country.

Earlier, Villar also filed a bill (SB 510) imposing a ceiling on public sector borrowings.

The senator said the council would audit the debts, especially those that were suspected of anomalous proceedings.

Party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo earlier recommended strategies to address the country's debt problems without imposing the tax burden on poor families.

Ocampo's strategies include lifting of the government's automatic budget appropriation for debt servicing, cancellation of onerous debts, and imposition of a five-year moratorium on foreign debt servicing.

The legislator criticized the Arroyo administration for forcing the people to pay more taxes to solve the government's budget woes. He said the Philippines should instead follow the lead of Argentina, which sought debt relief from its foreign creditors in the 1990s amid its worsening fiscal crisis.

Responding to comments that higher taxes, such as the proposed hike in value-added tax from 10 to 12 percent, was antipoor, Purisima said that the VAT increase would actually grant more resources to the government to improve basic services for the masses.

He also cited a government study showing that a 2-percentage point increase in VAT will only translate to a 0.2-percent rise in the cost of basic commodities that poor families purchase.

Purisima said turning away from obligations would not be healthy for the Philippines, which he said still enjoyed the confidence of the international credit market. The finance chief said he would try to maintain the positive credit image the country has enjoyed over the years despite its lingering fiscal problem. He stressed that there were benefits to be derived from keeping the country's credit-worthiness.

The DOF chief believes that the confidence the Philippines enjoys in the international credit market is the reason why the country can easily tap external financing when it needs to fill in its budget deficit.

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DOF to tie up with Neda, BSP to plug tax leaks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has adopted a new strategy to detect sources of tax leakages. This time, the DOF will match the level of economic growth in a region with the amount of taxes collected from the area. Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said that to implement this, the DOF would tie up with the National Economic and Development Authority for the gathering of data on economic growth and business activity in every region in the country.

After collecting gross domestic product (GDP) data in each of the Bureau of Internal Revenue's 19 regional offices, the data will be correlated with the amount of taxes collected from the regions covered.

Purisima explained that as a rule of thumb, a higher economic growth should mean higher tax collection for the government. Therefore, in regions where there is a high level of economic activity, the government should be collecting more taxes.

There are exemptions, however, such as when a region relies largely on agriculture because most farm activities are exempted from taxes.

Purisima said the DOF would also seek the cooperation of the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. In particular, the DOF will ask the Monetary Board for data on the amount of bank transactions in the all the regions covered. Bank transactions, he said, were also a gauge of tax liabilities.

"There are rational relationship between bank resources and taxation. The data will be useful for us in looking for opportunities (to improve tax collection)," Purisima told reporters after his speech on the country's fiscal issues before members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday.

Purisima said the strategy of taking a closer look at each and every region in the country would make it easier for the government to determine where it should focus its efforts to plug tax leakages.

The new finance chief said the strategy is one example of predictive auditing, a mechanism which he is espousing to improve revenue collection. Under the principle of predictive auditing, the government will use third-party data and industry benchmarks on revenues to determine accuracy in tax payments.

He said predictive auditing would help the government in its program to improve the country's tax buoyancy to a level at par with those of its neighbors. He noted that the Philippines' tax revenue tax collection in 2004 was equivalent to 12.5 percent of its GDP, which was a poor comparison to Malaysia's 16.5 percent.

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PIZZA AND LOTS MORE
CARD

PIZZA Hut's card promotion is now on its third year.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SUCCESSFUL retailers will tell you that, aside from keeping at least one step ahead of competition, they also consider key customers their dearest friends.

These retailers know all about their friends—who they go out with, what they like to do, how much they spend, where they spend that money on, what turns them off and, finally, what keeps them coming back for more.

They are careful not to take their friends for granted for, in the retail industry, it costs five to six times more to acquire a new customer than to keep an old one. It takes even more to win back old friends who left in a huff because they felt shortchanged.

There is another compelling reason why they must keep loyal customers happy: They almost always comprise roughly 20 percent of the total customer base, bringing in 80 percent of the revenue.

Thus, it does not take double degrees in business to figure out what retail companies, shopping centers, department stores and even manufacturing firms should do to come out ahead in an industry that is open to foreign players with deeper pockets and longer credit lines.

Just keep at least the 20 percent happy, these retailers say, and you may smile all the way to the bank.

Keeping someone happy, however, takes a lot of effort, even among the best of friends.

This is where customer relationship management, or one-to-one marketing and loyalty programs, comes into serious play, according to retail leaders who recently shared their experience with Business Friday.

Ralph's

Ralph's is one of the country's biggest distributors of wines and spirits. It was put up in 1975 in a small 30-square meter shop in Parañaque City, at a time when most Filipinos' concept of a drink was largely limited to beer, gin and local concoctions.

In 30 years, it grew to a network of 22 branches all over the Philippines, and one of the company founders attributes its growth and staying power despite competition to its close relationship with its base of fanatic customers.

Robert Joseph said in an interview that while other companies invested in advertising and other expensive marketing ventures, Ralph's stuck to nurturing an intimate relationship with its core customers.

"We hold free wine tasting sessions with our clients and other groups every week," Joseph said. "In this way, we let them know about the latest wines. It is our way of helping educate people on wine."

Ralph's also keeps tracks of its biggest customers through data culled from invoices and point-of-sale equipment, to ensure quality service.

Figaro
COFFEE CLUB
08/08/05

FIGARO's Coffee Club has some 4,000 members

These are on top of the discount and promotional programs that usually go with the launch of a new bottle of wine or liquor.

"We always involve the customer because customer is king," Joseph said. "We say that whatever they want, we have it for them."

Joseph, however, said that customer relationship programs would only go so far if not tied with good service extended to customers in the individual stores.

This is why Ralph's invests in staff training, so that they could help customers pick out the right kind of wine to suit their taste, budget, and the occasion.

"We encourage people to read the bottle and to try and expand their palate," Joseph said. "We also want them to feel welcome in the store, encourage them to look around and experience it."

The formula has worked as Ralph's has become a byword in the wine and liquor retail world, and has been instrumental in developing the Filipinos' taste for good wine.

Pizza Hut

Multinational food firm Pizza Hut has likewise raked in dividends from the success of its customer relationship program, this time in the form of a loyalty card called the Palm Card.

The Palm Card was originally conceived as a short-term promotion to get customers to think of Pizza Hut when they want to order pizza. But it became so successful that it is now entering its third year.

Under the program, customers who order a pizza and Pepsi will get a Hawaiian pizza (pizza with ham slices and pineapple tidbits) for free. It is sold for P240 each and can be used for six months.

"There was really a spike in sales because they were encouraged to order more, especially for those who want pizza delivered," said Elaine V. Guzman, Pizza Hut vice president for marketing.

Guzman said that, more than just encouraging customers to order pizza, the data gathered from the call centers processing the orders gave the company a better idea of who its customers are, their habits and preferences.

Guzman said the invaluable data enabled Pizza Hut to come up with advertising and marketing materials more attuned to the traits of its customers.

Guzman said the data would also come in handy when the company launches its direct mailing program this year to encourage customers to also try out other products, not just the pizza which is its best-selling product.

Pizza Hut figures showed that pizza sales account for 80 percent of total revenue. The objective of the new marketing programs is to balance the revenue mix to include its other products, such as salads and pasta.

Figaro

For Figaro, the country's biggest homegrown coffee chain, it was the customers that gave it the idea of coming out with a loyalty card to reward good clients.

The Coffee Club card has been around for some seven years, and Figaro CEO Pacita Juan said in an interview that it has contributed to the growth of the coffee chain, and did wonders for its effort to preserve the local coffee culture.

"What we did was to get all the regular customers together and organize them into a club," Juan said. "Being a member of that club gave them a sense of belonging, and they know that we consider them a part of the company."

From just offering free refills of the signature brew, the Coffee Club card has evolved into a value-packed card that gives members freebies such as a piece of cake during their birthday month, discounts for group purchases and access to exclusive events such as tours to the Amadeo coffee farm in Cavite.

"I believe that over the years, the perceived value of that card has increased, and the important thing is that people actually use it and are proud to carry one around," Juan said.

She said plans are underway to convert the Coffee Club card from a magnetic strip card to a chip card so that it could carry more information.

Juan said the data from the chip will give Figaro a better idea of what its customers want, thus, will aid in moves to innovate and keep in step with its key customers' wants.

"We want to get to the point where we will know exactly what the member drinks, and how he wants it prepared," Juan said.

Some failures

Yayu E. Javier, country manager of sales performance solutions company Avanza Inc., however, said that not all loyalty programs performed as expected, due mainly to wrong design and implementation.

Many firms fell prey to costly misconceptions that weakened their loyalty programs, Javier said, such as the belief that

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Movies offer US carmakers an alternative to TV ads

CHICAGO—Don't look for their names in the credits, but US automakers are increasingly "going Hollywood," taking starring roles in movies and even helping pen scripts in some cases.

In the unending battle to get their brands noticed and fight for market share, Ford Motor Co., General Motors Corp. and Chrysler are shifting more of their advertising budgets away from television commercials, as consumers zap ads with devices such as TiVo.

The Ford F-150 pickup truck will play a leading part in "XXX: State of the Union" from Revolution Studios, starring Ice Cube and Samuel L. Jackson, this summer's follow-up to the 2002 hit movie "XXX."

"It makes it exciting. You do things like this to create some buzz and excitement and to show that this is a great vehicle," Myles Romero, Ford manager of global brand entertainment, told Reuters in an interview at the Chicago auto show last week.

Unique deal

Ford, the world's third-largest automaker, signed a unique deal in 2003 with Revolution Studios, whose movies include "America's Sweethearts" (2001) starring Julia Roberts and "Maid in Manhattan" (2002) with Jennifer Lopez. It gave the automaker the right to put its vehicles into any of the company's films.

Ford can also help write its vehicles into the script, Romero said.

While other automakers hire outside firms to get their vehicles in movies, Ford last year opened an office in Beverly Hills, California, to work directly with moviemakers, Romero said. Al Uzielli, a cousin of Ford chief executive Bill Ford Jr., heads the office. Uzielli's work as a film producer and restaurant owner has helped the automaker establish relationships with producers, Romero said.

No rollovers

Ford will not show its vehicles in certain scenes, however.

"If it's a vehicle crash scene, or it's an SUV rolling over, I can tell you, it won't be our car in it," he said.

Two of the Ford vehicles from the upcoming "XXX: State of Union" went on display at the Chicago Auto Show, where Chrysler has set up what it says is the world's largest indoor test track. Consumers will be able to test drive Chrysler, Dodge or Jeep vehicles over a half-mile course at the show.

"What we're trying to do is to find ways to really connect to our customers in an experiential and interactive way," said Joe Eberhardt, executive vice president of Chrysler's global sales and marketing.

The Chrysler side of DaimlerChrysler AG had its first auto show test track in New York last year, which resulted in 36,000 test drives, with 8 percent of the drivers going on to buy a Chrysler product. Normally, only 0.5 to one percent of auto show attendees buy a vehicle, Eberhardt said.

Chrysler's Jeep Wrangler and Jeep Grand Cherokee will appear prominently in the action movie "Sahara," starring Penelope Cruz and Matthew McConaughey, opening in March. But Eberhardt added, "We're not in the business of writing movie scripts." The auto industry will spend an estimated $10.9 billion on advertising this year, up about 7 percent from $10.2 billion in 2004, according to Merrill Lynch analyst John Casesa. But an increasing amount of that spending is directed away from TV ads and toward movies, video games, test drives and events such as the auto shows, industry executives said.

Chili Palmer

GM's Cadillac brand will feature prominently in the movie "Be Cool," opening in March. In the film, John Travolta's character, Chili Palmer, has his Cadillac DTS luxury sedan destroyed by the mob, said Jay Spenchian, chief marketing officer for Cadillac.

"He loves his Cadillac and all the way through the rest of the movie, he's trying to get his Cadillac back," Spenchian said.

Foreign automakers are also getting into the act.

Consumer recognition remains the biggest obstacle for South Korea's Kia Motor Motors Corp., but more television advertising is not the answer, said Peter Butterfield, head of Kia's US arm.

Kia relies on other ways to reach consumers such as direct mail and Internet ads, he said. Last year, Kia gave away a "Shrek 2" DVD to consumers who took a test drive.

"Most consumers don't believe TV commercials," Butterfield told reporters at the auto show. "We shifted our marketing from about 100 percent TV three years ago to 75 percent TV."

Reuters

Jewelry as a new art form

By Alexa H. Bacay

JEWELRY-MAKING is an art form often taken for granted, and considered a mere hobby by people who buy jewelry for the sake of making a fashion statement.

But for Ming Ong, jewelry-making is more than a hobby. It is a passion to be pursued and shared with others.

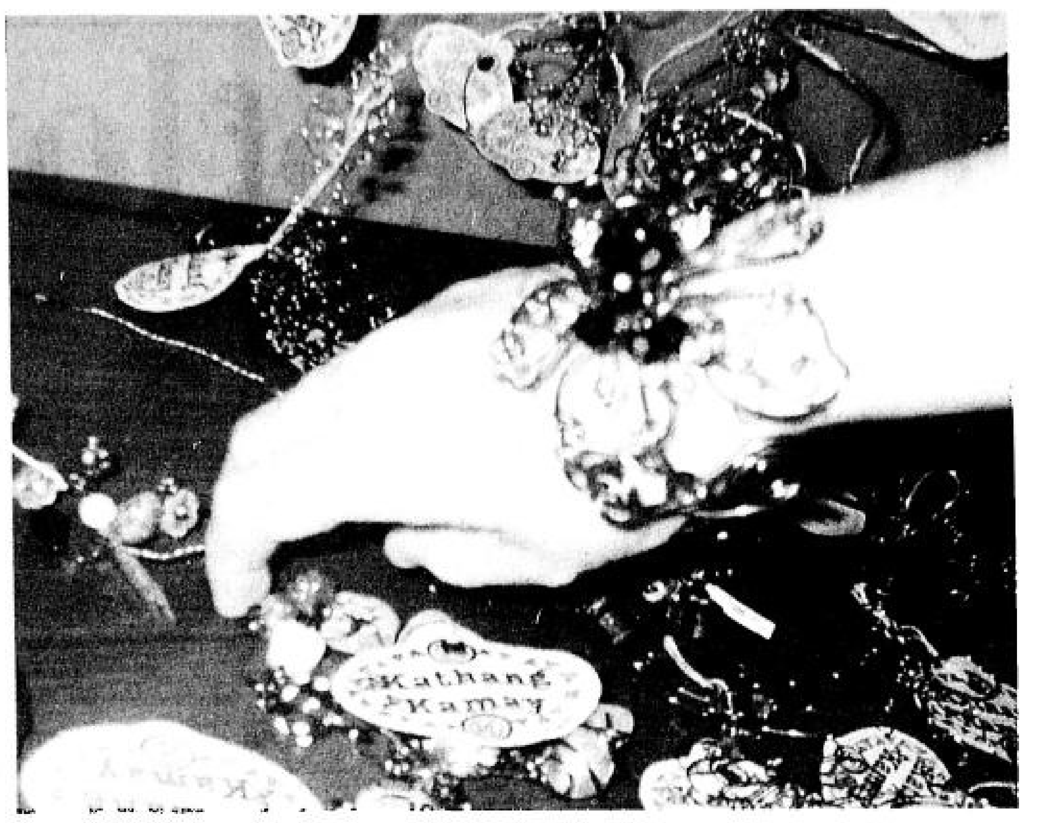
This art form which she coined "jewelry-sculpture art," is what Kathang Kamay is all about. It basically means wearable art that is like sculpture in form.

Each piece is made painstakingly by hand. And like a painting or sculpture, is given a title depending on what inspired her to make the piece.

"My pieces are products of experiences which I draw inspiration from," says Ming. "Other times it's from the shapes I see while walking, or from books I read."

Her "Ysabelle" tube bracelet and necklace, for instance, were inspired by the *"giniling"*—a brass bracelet worn by the Ifugaos.

Still finishing her postgraduate course on Fine Arts in UP Diliman, Ming was encouraged by Dean Virginia Dandan to go look for what she really wanted to do for a thesis proposal.



KATHANG Kamay's wearable art

MICHAEL MASIGLAT

Copper wire

A lover of jewelry-making since childhood, Ming would buy pieces from stores and alter them according to her own design, thus, making them her own.

But it was when she made her first sales to her classmates, that she realized what she wanted to do for the rest of her life.

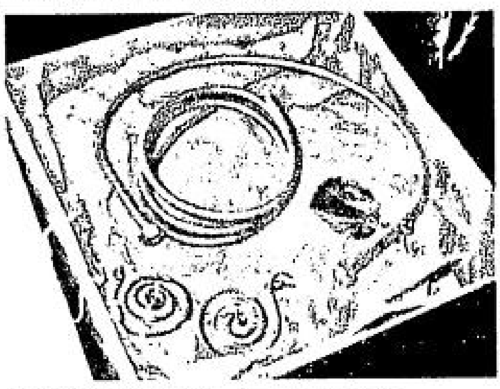
"I think I found an art form which clearly depicts me, and that is making jewelry-sculpture art," Ming proudly says. "After my master's degree, I would still concentrate on making jewelry pieces for people who appreciate my art."

The idea of using copper wire came to her one day when she passed by an appliance repair shop in Cubao where an electric fan was being fixed.

The copper wire caught her attention and that led to her discovery of its versatility.

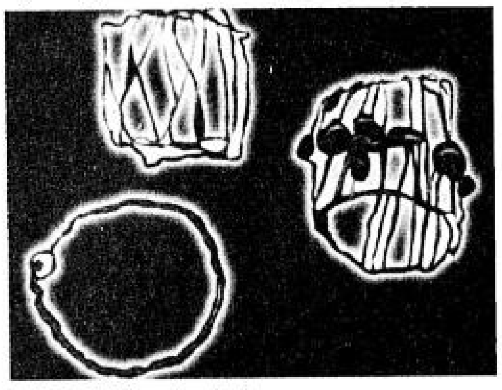
"It's a beautiful and uncommon material. Copper also has this unique brownish-gold color, which makes it beautiful," she explains. "And the material is very flexible."

Lately, her designs are taking a turn for what she calls an "art nuveau"-inspired phase, which consists of swirls. She related that even when she was still in high school, her drawings could easily be identified as hers because they were "*makulot*(curly).



MICHAEL MASIGLAT

THE "YSABELLE" as inspired by the "giniling" bracelet of the Ifugaos



BANGLES for the daring

MICHAEL MASIGLAT

MING ONG: An artist who aims to reach out and share her unique art form

Handmade

Ming, however, also executes art pieces in silver to cater to another market. Like her copper line, she also does each piece by hand.

On her first attempt to consign, she was disheartened because when she brought her pieces to a certain shop in Ortigas, she was made to wait for a year, only to realize that they were not interested in her art work after all.

Her fortune changed, however, when she was walking along San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas, for a job interview and saw the Souk store. She read about this store in magazines, so she decided to check it out. Fortunately, she wore her pieces of jewelry that day.

Souk manager Heidi Rozul saw Ming's pieces and urged her to bring her wares because they needed pieces for Christmas. After a week, she consigned her signed art work of jewelry-sculpture and the Kathang Kamay line became part of Souk.

When asked why she took in Ming's art work, Rozul says, "Because it was new and it's kind of different. I find it [Ming's jewelry-making] a raw talent."

Souk then started Kathang Kamay's string of luck.

After Souk, Ming sent a proposal to ishk in Astoria Plaza, also in Ortigas. She also approached Ces Drilon and gave her signed art works as well. This paved the way for her consignment in Magnet at ABS-CBN, and just recently, in Magnet Katipunan.

Ming's sculpture jewelry are reasonably priced and segmented for the middle and upper class.

She can also make jewelry depending on a customer's specifications, understanding that not all people are adventurous enough to wear big jewelry.

Her aim is to reach out to common Filipinos to inspire appreciation for this relatively new art form.

"What I want to happen is that people would wear my jewelry and be proud of it because it was made by a Filipino artist. I'm also hoping that people would come to perceive it as an art form, the way they perceive paintings and sculptures as art forms."

Intricate work

As a way of reaching out, Ming also e-mails her catalogue to her friends, who then sells her pieces to other people.

Though troubled with people who may imitate this new art form, Ming is confident that the intricacy of her jewelry sculptures will make her pieces stand out.

"I think the attention toward detail makes my art different and unique," says Ming. "I also come up with new designs every week so I know which pieces are original. I also have a way of signing my artwork, which makes it harder for others to imitate."

Kathang Kamay Jewelry Sculptures came up with the popular hobo look, in keeping with the latest design trends.

But for Ming Ong, her pieces are not just about making a fashion statement. It's about appreciating a new kind of art, whose time has come.

Kathang Kamay may be reached at minet_ph@yahoo.com

Entrepreneur brings a taste of Nepal to Baguio

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Not everyone can go to Nepal, the Hindu kingdom in the Himalayas. But people can at least go to a little shop in Baguio and have a taste of what the tiny country can offer.

Namaste Nepal, probably the only shop selling arts, crafts and food from Nepal, as well as neighboring Tibet, India and Thailand, had its debut at the Flower Expression grounds at the former carnival site in Burnham Park.

Although it is only a small booth now, Alice Aquino Shakya, Namaste Nepal's managing director, said she will soon open a shop at the Porta Vaga Mall near the Baguio Cathedral.

Shakya was born and raised in Baguio but has considered Nepal her home for more than 20 years. She crammed her Baguio shop with everything you can find in a Nepali bazaar, which is what she has back home.

"[If you're in Nepal], ask for the Filipina with a supermarket and they will bring you to me," she said.

Shakya was selling Universal Robina Corp.'s Chippy to Everest mountaineers in 1984 when she met and married Nepalese artist and trader Jiwan Shakya.

The Shakya clan is famous for creating, selling and importing Nepalese arts and crafts for generations. Pretty soon, Alice fit in nicely into the family business.

A SALES clerk of Namaste Philippines shows off various Nepalese and Tibetan crafts.

"But I still consider Baguio my home. I haven't even traveled to the mountains and other sights of Nepal. Whenever I have the chance, I go home to Baguio," she said.

She has decided to let her children study in Baguio and has invested in a water delivery service in the city.

But then, she said, there was still that urge to showcase Nepal to the Philippines, or to bring Mt. Everest to a Filipino, so to speak.

Last year, a sister visited her in Nepal and brought up the idea of opening a shop featuring Nepali products.

"So with that, I decided to put up Namaste Nepal," Shakya said.

"Namaste" is a traditional greeting in Nepal and India.

It could mean, among other things, "the God(dess) in me greets and honors the God(dess) in you," "I salute the divine qualities in you" or "my soul bows to your soul"—a perfect name for her store.

With a start-up fund of $15,000, Shakya launched her booth at Burnham Park.

She sells prayer wheels from P1,000 (portable) to P3,500 (traditional metallic). Her Nepali rugs are woolen, hand-spun, hand-sewn and vegetable-dyed. These sell for P7,000. But those in the rug industry know these are still a bargain.

She also has the small "tourist" rugs with Mt. Everest and yak designs. Her shop also has an assortment of Ghurka knives. The Ghurkas are traditionally known as the most courageous soldiers in the world, and their knives are used to behead their enemies.

Her singing bowls are made of seven metals and can "sing" when a wooden stick is spun on the edges. She also has cotton curtains from India. Nepali lokta paper (made from the bark of a lokta tree), and a thinner one made of Nepali grass are also sold in rolls or made into lamps and frames.

Her pashmina scarves at P1,500 are cheaper than those sold in Bangkok.

Namaste Nepal also sells different kinds of tea from India and Nepal, such as organic tea, orange pekoe, heart tea, kidney tea, mechi and masala tea.

What seemed out of place were the crazy hats which she sells for P400. As it turned out, during one Summer Olympics, Nepal was commissioned to make these party hats and these were the few still unsold.

"These are historic ones," Shakya said.

Is there a demand for her wares in the Philippines?

"There is always a market as long as the products are available," Shakya said.

She mentioned Buddhists and theologians as one market. Of the 150 Filipinos in Nepal, about half are theologians, Shakya said.

There are also collectors, and the plain curious, who can be counted on to buy one or two items.

Life in Nepal has rubbed off on Shakya, whose husband is a Buddhist, so much so that she wants to help establish a meditation center in Baguio, once her business succeeds.

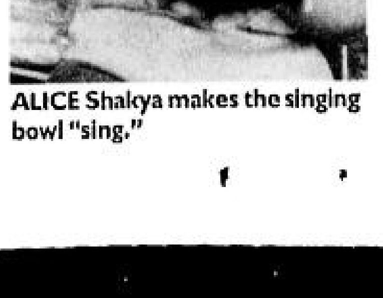
She will tap her 21-year-old daughter Zyla, who will earn her degree in mass communication at the Saint Louis University in April, as store manager.

"We have become too busy here. We have to relax a little bit," she said.

And anyway, if you want to go to Mt. Everest instead, there is another Filipina who manages the International Adventures, Treks and Expeditions.

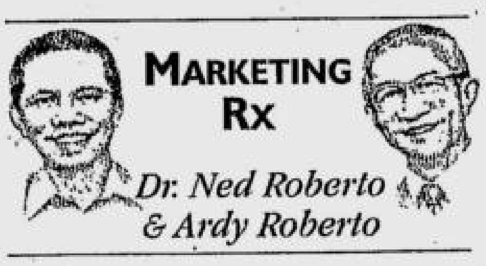
Emma Pariyar (www.himalaya-trekking.com) manages the company in Kathmandu. Its services include trekking, mountaineering, rafting, wildlife jungle safari in Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and Sikkim in India.

And if you get lost, only ask for the "Filipina with a supermarket," and you are in good hands.



ALICE Shakya makes the singing bowl "sing."

How do you market schools?—Part II



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

LAST week, we gave the first half of the answer to this question:

"We are all experiencing a decline in our college enrollment. How can marketing help us stop it?"—An association of private schools

Now, here's the concluding half:

What do schools produce?

The other way of looking at a BSBA program is to think of it as a manufacturing process.

It is a process that will produce at the end of the four years a graduate with "the right attitudes, competencies, and qualities for starting and managing small and medium enterprises."

So after those four long years, the graduate becomes the school's product. But at the start of those years, that same student can be considered the "raw material" for the "manufacturing" or transformation process.

Continuing with our PUP case, we can now see that the BSBA program is our school product at the recruitment and enrollment stage. Then, it acts as the "manufacturing" process during the four-year program.

On the other hand, the BSBA students play three distinctive roles: (1) direct market at the recruitment and enrollment stage, (2) "raw materials" and "goods in process" during the program's four-year processing, and (3) the school's products after graduation.

The graduate is our school's ultimate product. All of us refer to students as products of schools. This is especially true when we are talking about well-known personalities.

We've heard people ask, for example: "Did you know that Ninoy and Erap were products of Ateneo?"

"Isn't President GMA a product of UP as well as Assumption?"

Market

And who is the market for this post-graduation product?

In the case of BSBA graduates of PUP, the target market segment consists of employers in small and medium business enterprises. Here is the other reason why it makes sense to always define objectives in as specific terms as possible.

Just what does a non-specific objective sound like?

Consider this objective of the DLSU (De La Salle University) BSBA program:

"To produce entrepreneurs and business people who will excel in both the entrepreneurial and corporate world, and who will be globally competitive, quality oriented and above all socially responsive."

This actually sounds nice, especially when you hear it in a conference. But when a student or a student's parent reads it while seriously considering enrollment options, it raises questions and expectations that are difficult to visualize.

For example, can a BSBA program really transform a college student into a globally competitive manager, or an excellent starter entrepreneur after four years, and at the same time be socially responsive?

What does this make the school's MBA? Doesn't such an objective render its MBA unnecessary? Is this saying that the BSBA is the equivalent of its MBA?

Compare this objective to PUP BSBA's objective and you'll appreciate what it means and why it is better to plan and implement according to a specific objective.

Next: Should you have a marketing plan for this "ultimate" product?

Products

Let your "products"—your students—do the marketing.

Few will seriously challenge the idea that your school will become known for its products—the graduates. The driver is not going to be your BSBA program. It will be the products—the graduates—of that program.

We're actually talking here about your school reputation: what your school is known for; what it stands for. That's a long-term proposition.

We can then say that the students are the products for the long term: four years to transform them from raw materials into skilled employable graduates; and longer, for them to become successful practicing professionals.

What about our BSBA program as a product? It is our product for the short-term, as we already mentioned, at the recruitment and enrollment stage.

Why did we suggest that the graduates are the ultimate products, and employers, the most strategic market?

If employers are satisfied with the graduates they hire from PUP's BSBA program and believe that they are good because of what the PUP BSBA program did to them, they would do at least two things.

One, they will continue recruiting their managers and would-be managers from the PUP BSBA graduates. Two, they will talk to others about the PUP BSBA graduates.

The first is an example of a "repeat purchase." One tenet in marketing says that marketing success is a matter of repeat purchase, not first or trial purchase.

In fact, if there are more people who buy for the first time than those who make repeat purchases, then the product will likely fail eventually, or at best become a minor player in the industry.

This holds true even with the "school industry."

Employers comprise the primary market of schools. If the industry realizes that employers consider PUP BSBA graduates, for instance, as their preferred source of new manager trainees, then enrolling students, students' parents and guardians, and providers of student scholarships and sponsorships will likewise consider PUP their top school.

For this to be known depends on employers talking about the PUP BSBA graduates, and ensuring that they do talk about it depends on PUP's marketing plan.

The logical conclusion to all these diagnoses should be clear. More attention should be paid to employers and the other market segments we've identified.

What does this mean in practical terms?

Operationally, this implies that we ought to make the school's Placement Office (in charge of marketing graduates to employers) more important than the Admissions Office (in charge of marketing the BSBA program to potential enrollees).

And yet we all know how the Placement Office in most of our schools is often relegated to one small corner or a hole-in-the-wall section of the building.

More serious than the lack of adequate physical space is the lack of a strong marketing plan for student placement, and the flawless, stick-to-it implementation of this plan.

Needless to say, the Placement Office must be given priority in terms of having qualified managers and staff for school marketing planning and implementation.

These call for a new order of things, and a significant change in the management mindset of schools and their administrators.

If our diagnosis and its logic are accepted as true and compelling enough, then these changes and new order of things must be started now and institutionalized. Failure to do so could pose a serious risk of accelerating the decline.

Email your questions and comments to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

The prize of . . .

From page B2-1

a loyalty program is all about giving points that can be exchanged later for items, ranging from toys to big-ticket appliances.

In the end, Javier said it is about getting valuable customer data.

That data can then be used to help the retailer stock his shelves with the right products and services to suit his loyal customers' profile and behavior.

Expecting the loyalty program alone to build a throng of loyal customers is, again, unrealistic. But then, many retailers believe otherwise.

This caused many retail firms to expect too much out of their loyalty programs. Or, because of the program's design flaws, are unable to capitalize on the data on hand to improve their business and generate more profit.

Javier said the next step after getting customer data, is to customize products and services to meet customers' needs and wants.

Designing a loyalty program does require more from a company than initially thought. But Javier said it is an investment worth making because it does contribute to bigger profits.

She cited market studies that prove that a loyalty program with minimum support can make loyal customers out of 3 to 5 percent of the retailer's customer universe.

But a good loyalty program can attract as much as 20 percent of the customer base, which would be enough to provide a good return on the investment.

With a good program, profitable customers would be encouraged to stay loyal, through good times and bad. Just like good friends.

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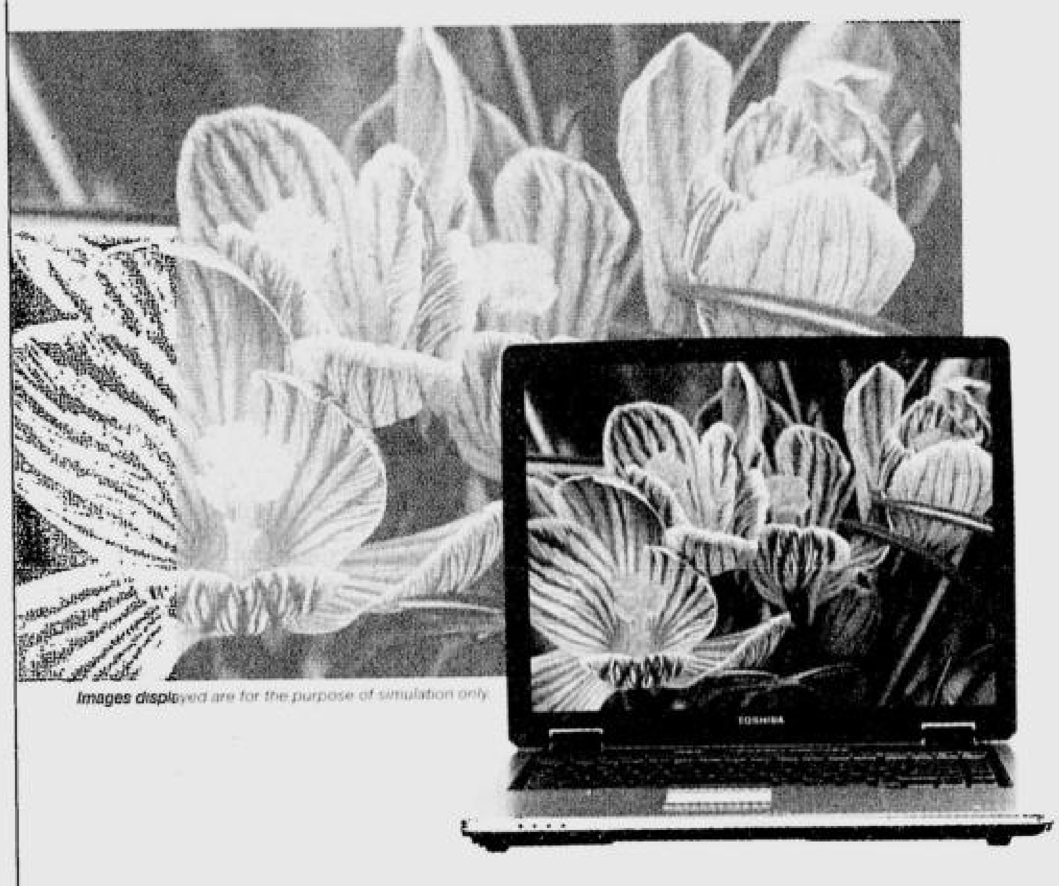

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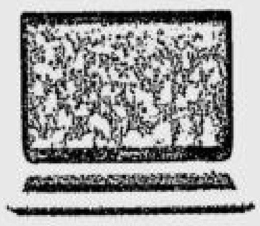

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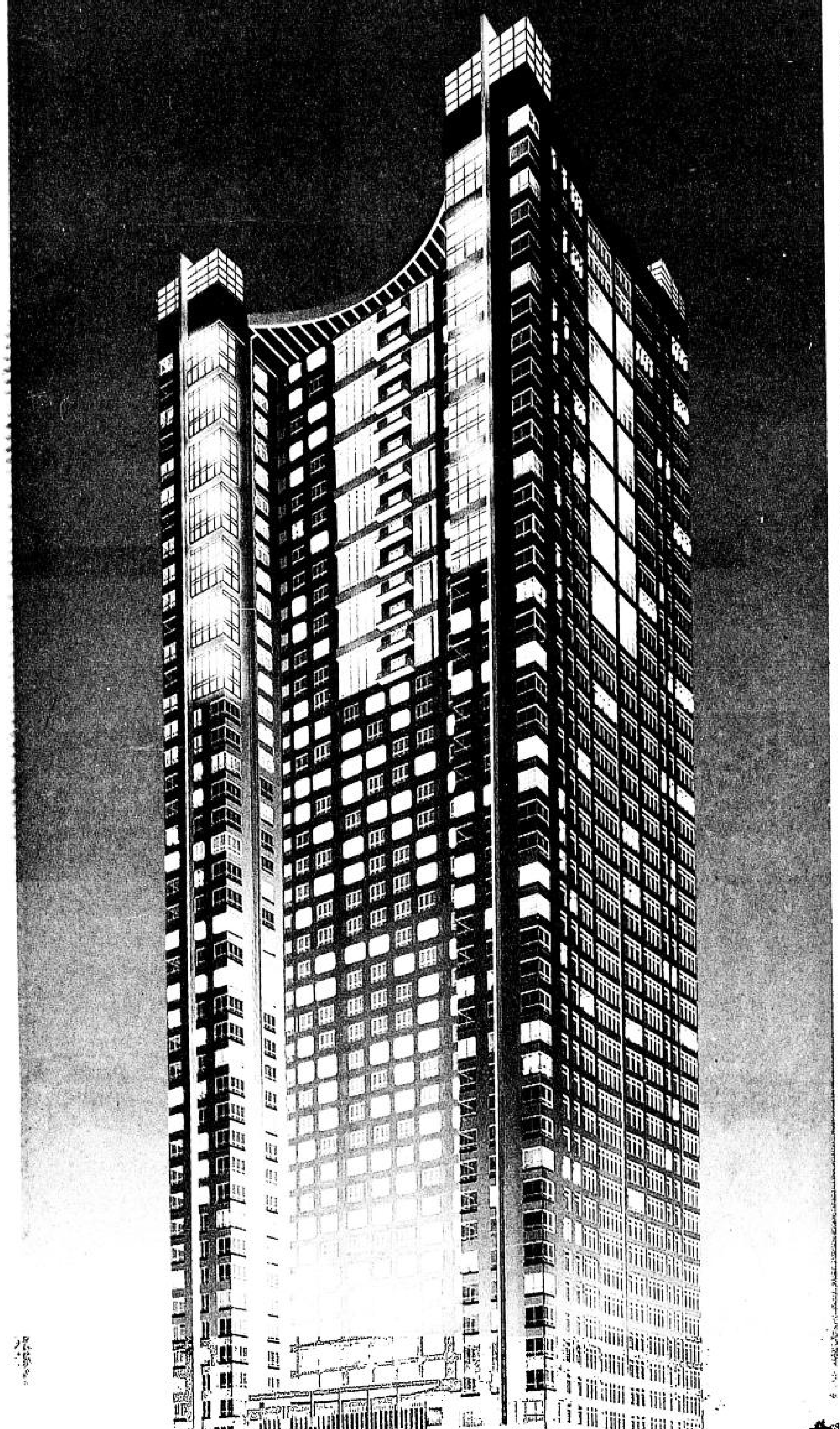

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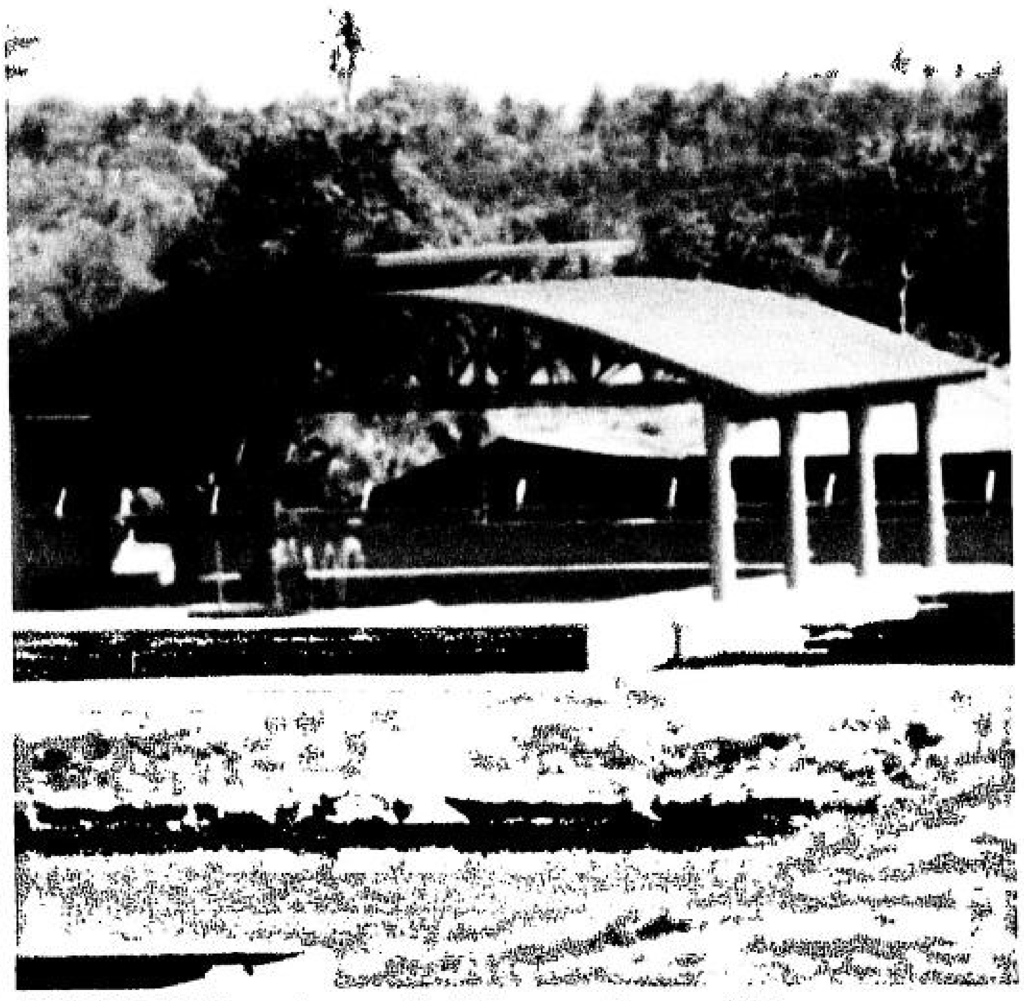


BUHAY-ISDAAN aims to do away with middlemen preying on small fishermen.

For live fish, fresh food, go to Dagupan

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Do you want to buy fish as fresh as they can get—alive and swimming? Then come to the Buhay-Isdaan (live fish market) at the compound of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources here.

"This is the first of its kind in the country and will serve as a meeting place for fish farmers and consumers. Prices will be low because there will be no middlemen in the transaction," said BFAR Center chief Westly Rosario.

The Buhay-Isdaan and the adjacent restaurant were recently inaugurated by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Buhay-Isdaan covers 1,300 square meters and is divided into three. One side has 30 compartments housing freshwater fish, another side has 30 compartments dedicated to marine fish, while the middle section serves as the "negotiation area."

Rosario said fish farmers will have free use of the Buhay-Isdaan for the first six months "as we try to study the nitty-gritty" of the system.

The BFAR, which will provide plastic bags and oxygen to customers who want to take home live fish, is still studying the days to be marked as market days.

"We are targeting small fish farmers who have no ready market for their produce," Rosario said.

To be sold at the Buhay-Isdaan are bangus, lapu-lapu, seabass, freshwater shrimp (ulang), oysters and other edible fish, as well as ornamental or aquarium fish.

Aside from providing fresh fish to consumers, the Buhay-Isdaan also aims to provide a market place for fishermen who are at the mercy of middlemen who dictate the price of fish.

"We are not discouraging big fish farmers from selling their produce here, although it will not really be practical because they can only sell a few kilos at a time," Rosario said.

Each compartment measuring 2 x 1.2 meters can contain 25 kilos of fish. Fish producers are expected to get a better price for their produce because live fish commands higher prices.

Market goers may also choose to have their purchase cooked at the new Aquarium building beside the live fish market.

The two-story building houses a restaurant on the second floor, which will only serve fish dishes.

On the ground floor are big aquariums that will showcase indigenous and exotic species, like ludong, maliputo and tawilis.

The BFAR is also preparing the "Bingwitan," a 2,000-square-meter fishpond where customers can catch fish for fun, or for cooking at the restaurant.

Nipa huts will be put up around the pond, and the area will later be called "Bingwit and Eat."

"We are trying to model many business opportunities in fish farming here," Rosario said, citing the live fish restaurant and the Bingwitan as examples of businesses that fish farmers can venture into.

As an added service, the BFAR will schedule free training on culture of different species, which fish farmers can attend after selling their produce.

It is not only the edible fish that will be traded in the Buhay-Isdaan but also freshwater aquarium fish.

Rosario said there was a potential market for aquarium fish in the United States and Europe, which have banned aquarium fish from other Asian countries because of diseases.

The Philippines exports marine aquarium fish, but imports freshwater varieties.

"Producing freshwater aquarium fish is easy but we are importing from other countries. At present, the only market for decorative fish is at Cartimar in Pasay City. Here, you buy the fish species direct from farmers so the fish are sturdier," Rosario said.

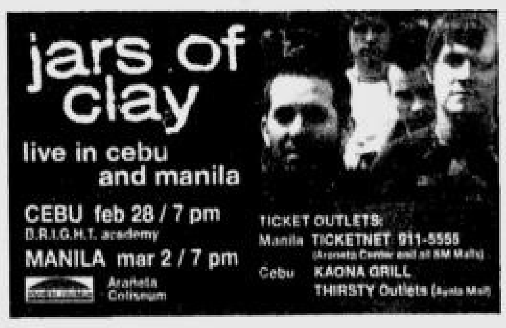
He said exporting marine aquarium fish was not easy as some fishermen use cyanide to collect them. But because of the promising market in the country and abroad, the BFAR has encouraged entrepreneurs to go into aquarium fish production.

It is extending technological assistance to interested persons who are out to take advantage of rising demand.

ANGUS FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY RAY B. ZAMBRANO, PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BANGUS is just one type of fish that will be sold at the Buhay-Isdaan



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Colour Everywhere
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• See posters for details

Jasmine's inseparables

"HERBENCH Proud to be Pinoy" cotton crewneck graphic print tee

HERBENCH endorser Jasmine Trias considers some things essential in her life.

These include, first of all, her talent. Jasmine's love for music is her essence. Though she grew up in the United States, Jasmine's singing isn't complete American—it's a blend of pop, R&B, soul and that unmistakable Pinoy emotion.

When she sang her famous "Inseparable" song for her new HerBench TV commercial, she admitted thinking of her Filipino fans as the subject of the song ("Inseparable, that's what you are to me... inseparable"), which made it all the more heartfelt and poignant.

Like any 17-year-old, Jasmine also can't get enough of dressing up. A fashionista since childhood, she's proud to have developed her own way of accessorizing, as seen in that trademark flower in her hair.

She goes for the casual, carefree look of HerBench—jeans, t-shirts, tube tops, tank tops and funky accessories. Her ever-growing box of trinkets—which carries everything from her flowers to bracelets to tiaras to barrettes—is always with her wherever she goes.

When she was at SM Megamall for the HerBench mini-concert and autograph signing, Jasmine couldn't wait to shop at the Bench flagship store there, where she was bowled over by the variety of merchandise (she's an extra small, by the way).

For a 17-year-old, this girl has amazing professionalism. She is very punctual and very persevering, and she is used to disciplining herself, starting from the grueling phases she had to undergo to reach the finals of "American Idol," which required constant self-improvement.

She also went through incredibly difficult work hours when she joined the "American Idol" international tour, traipsing around the globe to entertain thousands of fans and making sure her voice was in tip-top condition.

Her much-anticipated homecoming to the Philippines late last year was the ultimate test of her endurance. She had to face a nonstop schedule of parties, celebrations, interviews, TV appearances, mall tours, a concert, and photo shoots.

And as HerBench image model, she had to pose in dozens of different HerBench outfits made especially for her. But ever the trouper, she was game all the way.

ON JASMINE: "Inseparable" cotton-ringer graphic print tee

"ROCK N' Roll high 93 school" cotton V-neck graphic print tee

"HELLERRR!" cotton-ringer graphic print tee

"HERBENCH Sweet Jasmine" cotton-spandex graphic print tank top

WACOAL NEWS
Wacoal

Are you Looking For the Perfect Fit?

Amazingly, majority of women don't wear the correct size of underwear. This results to a feeling of discomfort, bad posture and sometimes even breathing difficulties.

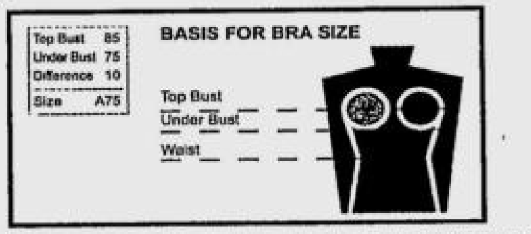
Women often make the mistake of buying underwear that is either too small or too big for them. It's simply because they get used to what they were wearing for the last months or years. Weight may remain the same but one's figure changes by the days and season due to various factors such as activities, health and growth. Women should be aware of this and they should check their measurement regularly.

Sometimes women purposely skip or fail to have their measurements taken when they shop just to save time. Others who try measuring themselves have difficulty obtaining accurate measurements due to distorted posture and lack of measuring skills.

Now, women can have their measurement taken perfectly by WACOAL's expert Beauty Advisers. Just go to any WACOAL outlet inside department stores.

It is important to know the correct size. Wearing the right undergarment size will not only give comfort, but most importantly, it will also provide the necessary support to enhance the body proportions.

Brassiere size is based on the underbust measurement. The cup size is determined by the difference between the topbust (highest point of the breasts) and the underbust (vergeline - below the breasts curvature). To ensure that you're getting the right size, choose the brand that uses the International standard of measurement like WACOAL.



The Fitting Wacoal Spokesperson

The name Abbygale Arenas – de Leon has always been associated with Filipina beauty.

She has been the embodiment of the Filipina beauty early on in her career. She won the search for Supermodel of the World, Philippines in 1992. Five years later, she was crowned Binibining Pilipinas. She even did our country proud when she was chosen Ms. Photogenic in the renowned Ms. Universe Beauty Pageant, back in 1998. Now, a wife and a mother, Abby was included in 2004 Mega Magazine's list of Top 10 Most Beautiful Women in the Philippines.

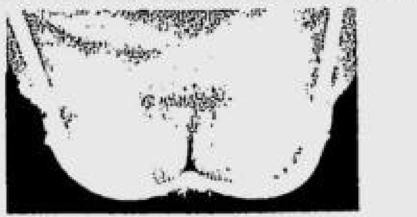
With all these recognitions under her belt, she sought other avenues to advocate Filipina beauty. She shared her expertise as a beauty and image consultant, columnist, make-up artist, and television commentator on beauty and image enhancement for GMA 7 and ABS-CBN 2.

To keep abreast with international advancements in beauty, she even went through a seminar and training on image enhancement in New York. She also underwent training on professional beauty make-up in Hollywood, Los Angeles.

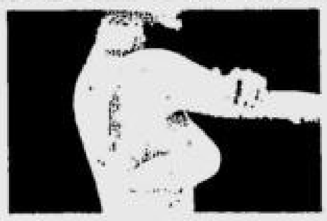
Wacoal shares Abby's desire to impart knowledge about beauty and image enhancement. This is the reason why Abby was chosen to be the spokesperson for Wacoal's 2005 Perfect Fit Campaign. Both Wacoal and Abby believe that the proper fit of brassiere will help women in their pursuit for true beauty.

Wearing the brassiere that perfectly fits would not only enhance a woman's physique and proportion, but will also improve her level of comfort and eventually her confidence. Having the perfect fit can actually enhance one's beauty and image.

Ms. Abbygale Arenas – de Leon.

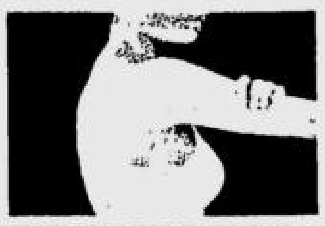


BRA CUP **TOO SMALL** FOR THE BUST SIZE.



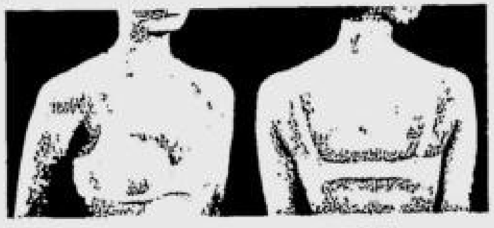
SHOULDER STRAP IS **TOO TIGHT.**

CUP SIZE **TOO SMALL.**



NOT PROPERLY ALIGNED FROM CUP TO THE BACKSTRAP.

LOWER AREA OF THE BRA IS **TOO LOOSE.**



PERFECT FIT.

Here are the right procedures in wearing a bra:

1. Put both your arms through the shoulder straps to have the bra hanging on the shoulders. Use both hands to hold the lower hem of the bra-cups.
2. Bend your body slightly forward to allow both breasts to slip fully inside the bra-cups. Then, buckle up the back hook.
3. Adjust the shoulder straps; gather the breasts from the sides towards the center into the bra-cup.
4. When wearing a bra with a front hook, slip in both arms through the straps, pull down the sides from the back. Then buckle up the hook. This style of brassiere helps enhance your bustline beauty.
5. Once you've tried the undergarment on, raise both arms, bend your body and generally move around to see if you feel comfortable.

Consider all these and you will find a bra that will suit you perfectly.

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NINI Licaros, a close friend of Louie Camino

GARY Valenciano at the necrological service for Louie

PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

One quiet presence

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

He never brought noise or fuss, only skills and values

WE just buried Louie Camino Tuesday—the INQUIRER Entertainment editor, to you, and more than that to us, his friends and colleagues.

He had been a quiet presence in the newsroom and even beyond that, into our private lives. Quiet and subtle but deep and intense. That was Louie's character. He never brought noise or fuss, not to the INQUIRER, not to the Journal, the newspaper where we first worked together more than two decades ago.

He was not one to call attention to himself, and his ego hardly needed feeding. That made him a rare creature in an era that subsists on stars, and in a mass media industry where the line between craft and celebrityhood is blurring.

Instead, Louie was content to plod on in the backroom day after day as every battle-tested editor does. His was a quiet toil. And he worked almost to the day he breathed his last.

Louie brought not only skills and mastery of craft into our profession. He brought values. He was simple and honest, and he worked hard. He wanted to do his work, he said, even as his "cancer kept spreading."

While capable of thoroughly enjoying a good meal and good wine, he wasn't blinded by the perks and clout his position brought, and again that's getting rarer in this day and age when PR pampering could hold sway.

And he didn't power trip.

He wrote, loved to read books, edited the pages, and like a committed professional, tried to make today better than yesterday's scoops.

All this would be Louie's legacy—the integrity of his craft, the quiet, hard work, his having been unspoiled by power. He belonged to a well-honed generation of journalists that may not be dominant for long.

His wake and funeral made evident the sturdy friendships he had kept through time—to name a few: Ester, Totoy, Nini (Licaros, whom Louie had covered during her brief political career), another Nini (Valera), Leah who, with Louie's family, even took it upon herself to arrange his funeral services in the dead of night.

Oh, but don't misconstrue all of the above: Louie wasn't boring. He had his self-indulgent and flamboyant moments with Leah, Susan, Vangie—the girls of Lifestyle then.

For instance, he'd do the swing—Louie was a good dancer—with the girls as we closed pages way into the night, sans music; that was our break. (That's as far as I would tell.)

"We have so little time on earth," Dennis (Valdes) said, realizing it after his near-fatal helicopter crash recently. How true.

And Louie made use of his so little time in a good and beautiful way.

School ties

Pardon me as I go from one grief to another. We lost a fellow Theresian, the ebullient Imelda Oben, after her long debilitating illness.

But despite the sadness, I went away from the wake with the heartwarming thought that a few former classmates had spent moments with her the past year or so, even as she lay bedridden, keeping her company and even helping her move her arms and limbs. (A brain tumor impaired her faculties, one after another.)

How, could women, who have taken different roads, led different lives, and now have different responsibilities, come together week after week to look after an ailing former (grade and high school) classmate?

School ties that bind—that's one of life's most beautiful mysteries. Our condolences to Mel's children, Emily and Matthew.

Got it

Now on to another editor, this time the supreme "editrix" herself, Vogue's Anna Wintour, whose unauthorized bio, just off the press, is already setting many tongues ablaze with its revelations.

By accident, I found a copy at Rockwell's bookstore last week. I couldn't believe that copies of Jerry Oppenheimer's "Front Row: The Cool Life and Hot Times of Vogue's Editor in Chief" are already here. I literally grabbed one.

Already New York Post's Richard Johnson of Page Six focused on—what else—the book's accounts (plural) of the men (so plural) in Anna's life.

He ticked off a few: the reggae legend Bob Marley in the late '70s, British gossip columnist Nigel Dempster, and Monty Python star Eric Idle. And—that, according to the book, the style icon worked for porn king Bob Guccione once upon a time.

A quick scan of the book revealed such prominent tidbits as how Anna's marriage to a prominent psychologist hit splitsville as it became known that she was getting involved with a Texas tycoon.

If only to know what people will be or are already talking about, I will settle down with this book and spend the long weekend, so to speak, with one of the world's most powerful women.

That's going from a week of grief to a weekend of gossip. (Expect my Anna Wintour next week.)

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

Hitched to 'Hitch's' style

A HIP romantic comedy must have a hip costume designer. So for Columbia Pictures' upcoming Will Smith-starrer "Hitch," director Andy Tennant chose designer Marlene Stewart, who previously created clothes for Madonna, Cher, Paula Abdul, Gloria Estefan and Janet Jackson.

Tennant credits Stewart and her team for helping him set the right tone for the film. "Their job was to make the movie look as cool as Will Smith does in person, and they did just that."

In the film, Smith stars as Alex "Hitch" Hitchens, a legendary New York City "date doctor" who, for a fee, helps clueless men woo the women of their dreams.

Stewart, who previously worked with Smith on "Enemy of the State" and "Ali," saw the character of Hitch as a hip New Yorker, who is always pulled together, but is very casual about it. While many of Smith's clothes were custom-made for the athletically built actor, Stewart also dressed him in some designer wear.

"We used some Etro jackets, some Prada, some Gucci," she says. "And we tried to push the envelope a little bit in terms of color—lavenders and pinks, with seersucker—what you'd see on a well-dressed man in Milan."

Clothes are in fact an important part of Hitch's work since he grooms his clients in preparation for their big dates. "Part of the movie is extreme makeover," says Stewart. "Most of the guys in the movie start to look like Hitch at a certain point. For example, when we first see Kevin James' character, Albert, the accountant who hires Hitch in order to win the love of gorgeous heiress, Allegra (played by supermodel-turned-actress Amber Valetta), he is wearing a rather loud green gabardine suit with white socks—a common faux pas. After some coaching from Hitch, Albert becomes more fashionable—darker clothes, a smart part of jeans," explains Stewart.

Sara, the gossip columnist played by Eva Mendes, is also fashionable, but with her own particular style. She begins the story in darker colors, in a pantsuit that reflects her seriousness about her career. Gradually, she lightens up in both color and more feminine silhouettes.

WILL Smith in "Hitch"

AMBER Valleta (bag by Hermes, necklace by Bulgari)

Amber Valetta's character, on the other hand, wears designer clothing as her socialite character would. "What we went for with Amber was the beautiful dress," says Stewart. "We used some Prada and some Yves St. Laurent, and she carried beautiful Hermes bags."

The jewelry maker Bulgari supplied Stewart with many of the necklaces Valletta wore in the film. "She was sporting some major bling," says Stewart. And she wore it beautifully since Valletta, a supermodel, is no stranger to wearing designer jewelry and clothes with ease.

SOME Prada and Gucci for Smith

A Bob Mackie Award-winner for Design, Marlene Stewart has been the costume designer for such films as Alejandro González Iñárritu's "21 Grams," Oliver Stone's "JFK," James Cameron's "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" and "True Lies," among others.

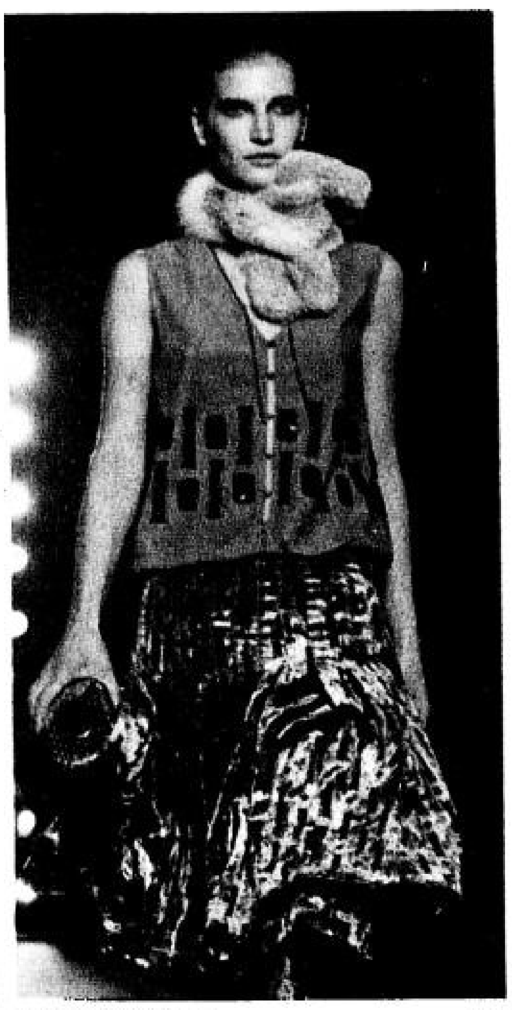
She began her career designing women's clothing and had her own label, Covers. Her work took her all over Europe. After meeting Madonna, she was invited to design outfits for several of the singer's most popular and influential music videos, including "Vogue," "Material Girl," "Like a Prayer" and "Express Yourself."

She also worked with Madonna on two movies, Alek Keshishian's "Truth or Dare" and Abel Ferrara's "Dangerous Game."

Opening on March 2 across the Philippines, "Hitch" is distributed by Columbia Pictures, local office of Sony Pictures Releasing International.

BOTTEGA Veneta AFP

BOTTEGA Veneta AFP


BOTTEGA Veneta AFP

Leather luxe
at Bottega Veneta, fashion fun at Emporio Armani

EMPORIO Armani AFP

MILAN—Bottega Veneta kicked off the Milan fashion week of preview womenswear showings for next winter with its first ever runway show Monday, and the collection by creative director Tomas Maier was an ode to romanticism and craftsmanship.

Models in flared princess coats, high-heeled pumps and artisan bags walked out from behind a backdrop printed with the words, "When your own initials are enough," the slogan of the upscale leather goods manufacturer that was founded in 1996 and is now part of the Gucci Group.

The show was all about top-drawer dressing by a woman intent on being one of a kind. But most of all the slender winter silhouette helped define the accessories which are the trademark of the company.

This season the bag is smaller and held closer to the body to match the narrow silhouette of small shoulders and elongated hemline. Heels are extra tall whether thick and sporty for daytime or narrow and demure by night. The rich fall colors of the leather combine with the intense orange, green and gray of the shimmery silk velvet jersey used for many of the outfits to create a warm winter feel.

The detail of the handbags represents the best in Bottega Veneta craftsmanship. Along with the trademark braided leather, the new collection offers pieces of onyx sewn into the weave, and handles worked like jewelry to create a winding vine effect.

Since Maier joined in 2001, Bottega Veneta had been doing presentations of its collections in the company's Milan showroom.

"The runway represents the need for the company to evolve, to offer the whole look," Maier said after the much applauded show.

Later Monday "moda Milanese" icon Giorgio Armani presented his second line Emporio collection aimed at the younger set.

The extravagant show paid tribute to the Hollywood of yesteryear with a series of what the designer calls "fabulous moments."

At times for the Armani client these moments might better be defined "surprising." A pantsuit in red and white checks, and exotic patterns for a silk miniskirt with matching stockings, leopard printed coats and pinstriped shorts are not the usual staid Armani fare.

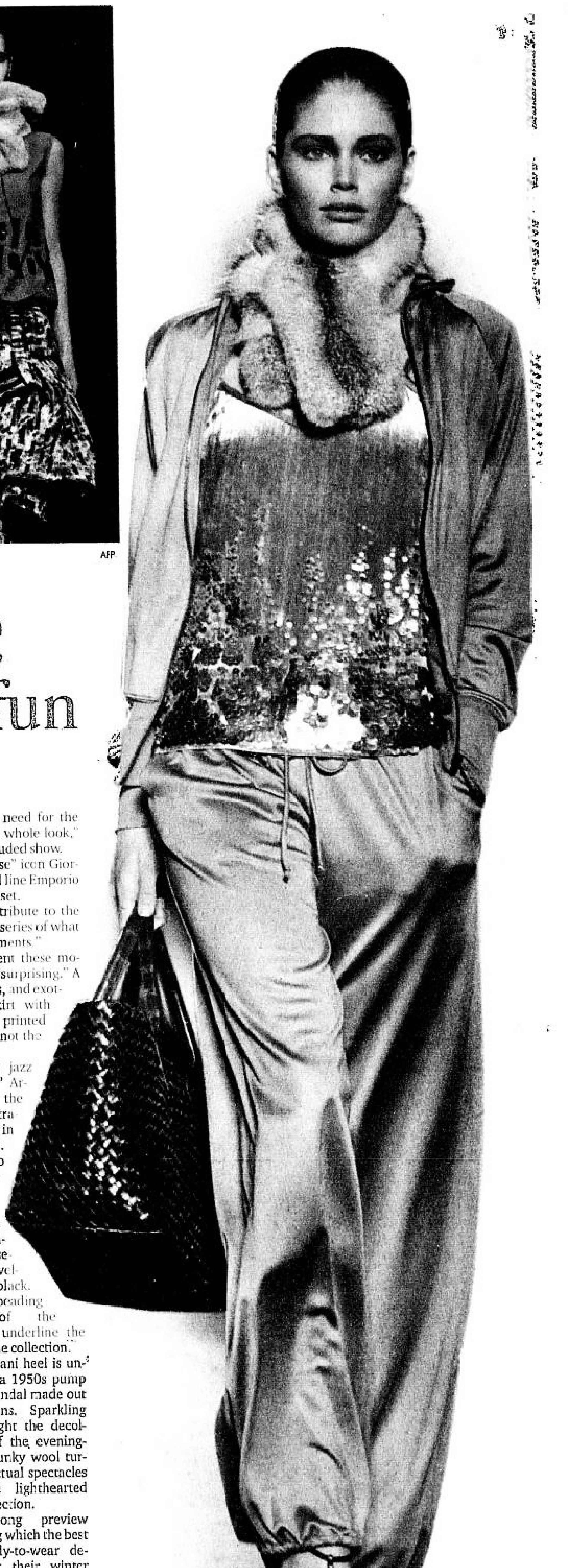
"I wanted to jazz things up a bit," Armani said after the show, in his ultramodern space in downtown Milan.

Jackets tend to be long and ultra feminine with ruffled lapel and plunging neckline. The favorite fabric is seductive stretch velvet—usually black. Fringes and beading reminiscent of the Charleston era underline the retro theme of the collection.

The new Armani heel is unusually high in a 1950s pump or an evening sandal made out of satin ribbons. Sparkling brooches spotlight the decollete neckline of the eveningwear, while a funky wool turban and intellectual spectacles emphasize the lighthearted spirit of the collection.

The week-long preview showings during which the best of Italian ready-to-wear designers present their winter wears ends Saturday with the Dolce and Gabbana duo, one of the hottest labels on the contemporary Milan fashion scene. *AP*

EMPORIO Armani REUTERS


BOTTEGA Veneta AFP

EMPORIO Armani AFP

EMPORIO Armani AFP

EMPORIO Armani REUTERS

EMPORIO Armani REUTERS

EMPORIO Armani AFP

Wine and cheese club launch

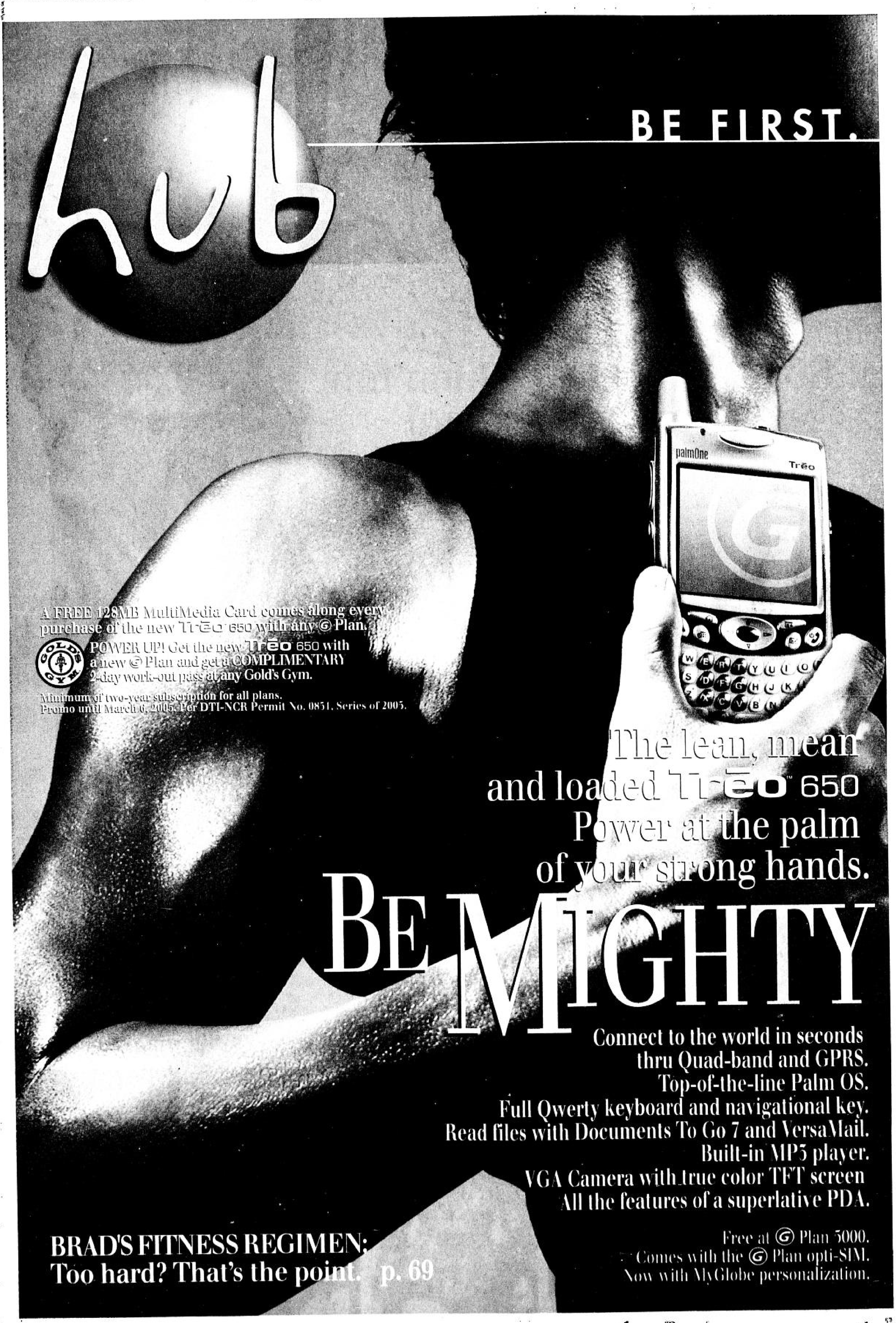
THE PRINCE of Jaipur, listed in the Philippine Tatler Best Restaurants guide book, is launching a unique monthly gathering of wine and cheese enthusiasts. The club will have its first gathering on March 1, 6 p.m., and will thereafter meet every first Tuesday of the month. The club's featured guests this month are the Miss Hawaiian Tropics girls. The Prince of Jaipur is at Unit E, The Fort, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig Metro Manila. Call 8841692/1694, fax 8857201, e-mail prince_of_jaipur@hotmail.com.

GOINGS ON

PROMO. LG Electronics holds its Gold Fin Promo until March 31. Discounts are offered on room air conditioners. Call 6402525.

MODEL SEARCH. The search is on for this year's batch of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall's Generation East models. Secure a form at the Ad and Promo Department. Submission of forms is ongoing until April 8. Call 6815401.

SEMINARS. CFS Continental Technology is offering the following seminars: "Warehouse Management" (March 4), "Effective Supervisory Skills" (March 17), "Effective People Management Leadership" (March 19), "Time Management and Handling Stress and Pressure" (March 12). Call 8697960/8232358.



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BRAD'S FITNESS REGIMEN:
Too hard? That's the point. p. 69

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Marie France Bodyline
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Corsage to last beyond prom night

HIGH-SCHOOL juniors and seniors who'll be attending prom night or graduation ball can get a corsage that will stay fresh and sparkly forever.

Alessa Libongco hand-fashions floral brooches, bracelets, necklaces and boutonnieres from delicate beads to accessorize formal wear.

The accessories are shaped like daffodils, azaleas, hibiscus and camellias, among others, in pretty pastels and bright hues. They're not only trendy but can be reused again and again.

Libongco accepts orders for special colors or materials to match outfits. A special price is given for orders of both boutonniere and corsage. Orders must be made 10 to 14 days in advance. Call 0917-7371376 or e-mail alessalibongco@gmail.com.

FOR BEAUTY that never fades. Orange daffodil choker that can also be worn as a wrist corsage. Dress by Michi Calica-Sotto. Layers of pearls by House of Laurel

THE PERFECT little accent for that picture-perfect look. Large plum camellia brooch. Dress by Michi Calica-Sotto

ROMANCE her with a flower, and she'll forget-you-not. On her: Pink azalea wrist corsage on green velvet. On him: Forget-me-nots boutonniere. Dress by House of Laurel

PHOTOS : JERVY SANTIAGO
STYLING: YOYA GUECO
HAIR AND MAKEUP MADGE LEJANO
MODELS. PATTY LAUREL, REGINE PANULIO, NOELLE HILARIO AND DIDOY LON

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LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN!

February 25, 2005
- Pintura at Pananaw Painting Competition at KCC Mall
- 4X4 Offroad Challenge Motorcade at Major Thoroughfares
- Youth Festival Night at Lion's Beach Stage
- Search for Lakandula and Lakambini ng Kalilangan at Oval Plaza Stage
- East Asia Royale Hotel's Street Party at EARH Parking Area

February 26, 2005
- 4X4 Offroad Challenge at Robinsons Vacant lot
- Pagana Ethnic Cuisine & Culinary Competition at KCC Mall
- Honda Gymkhana Challenge at Lagao Junction
- Intensity G Motorcade
- Malakas at Maganda Singing Competition at Lion's Beach Stage
- Live band at 8 Tracks Bar
- Party Zone at the Oval Plaza
- Babes Bar at East Asia Royale

February 27, 2005
- Kadsagayan Street Dancing Competition (Open Category) at P. Acharan-Pioneer-Pendatun Oval
- Dog Conformation Competition at Oval Gym
- Kadsagayan Street Dancing Competition (Local Category) at P. Acharon Sports Complex
- Kidig-kidig sa Kadalanan at Disko sa Pioneer Avenue
- Kidig-kidig sa Baybayon at Disko sa Lion's Beach
- Street Party at Pioneer Avenue

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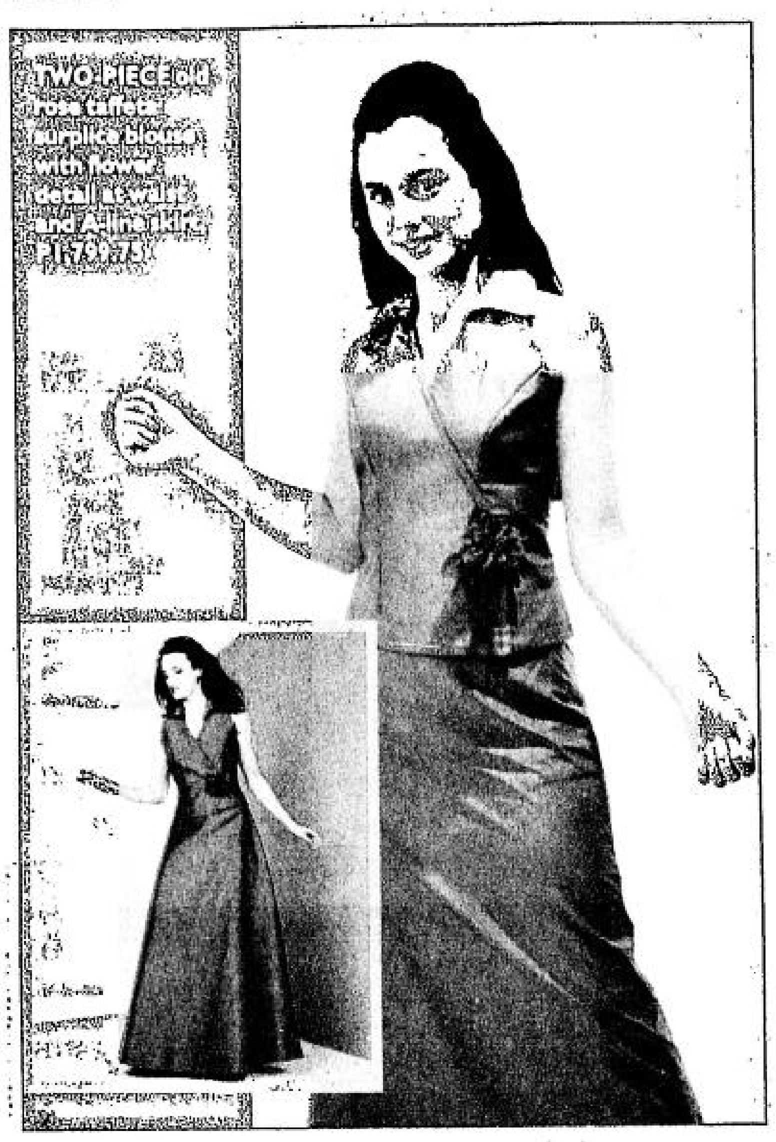
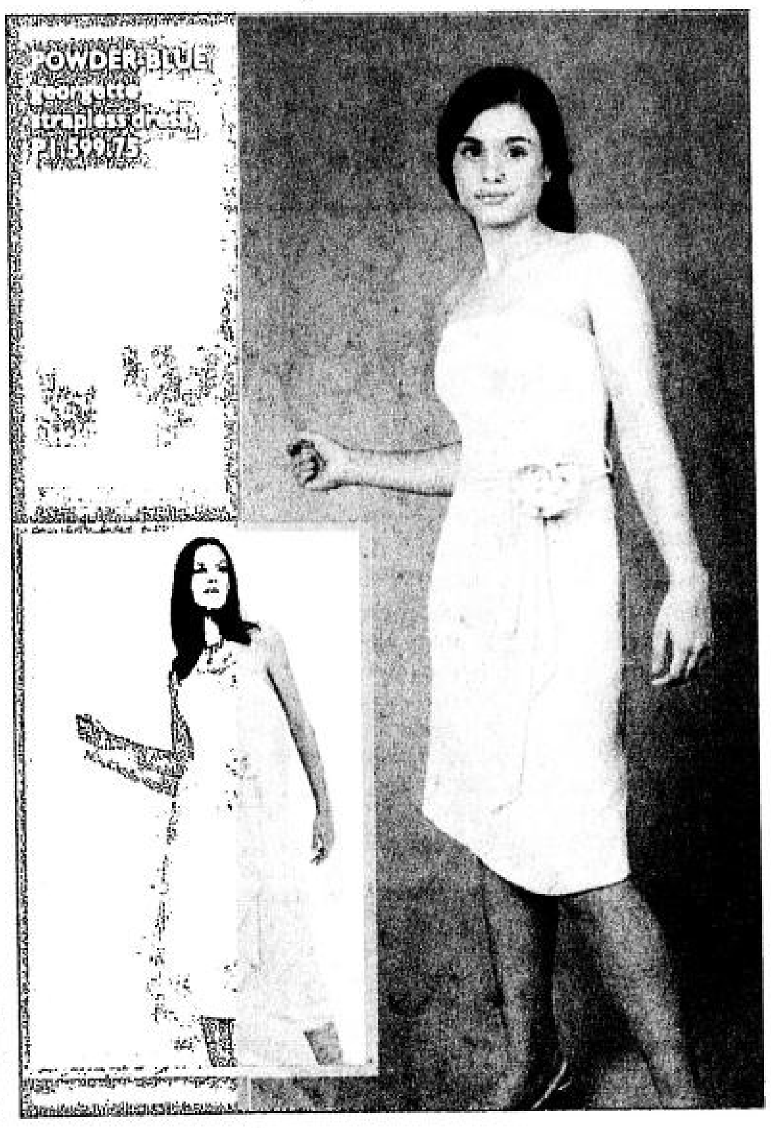
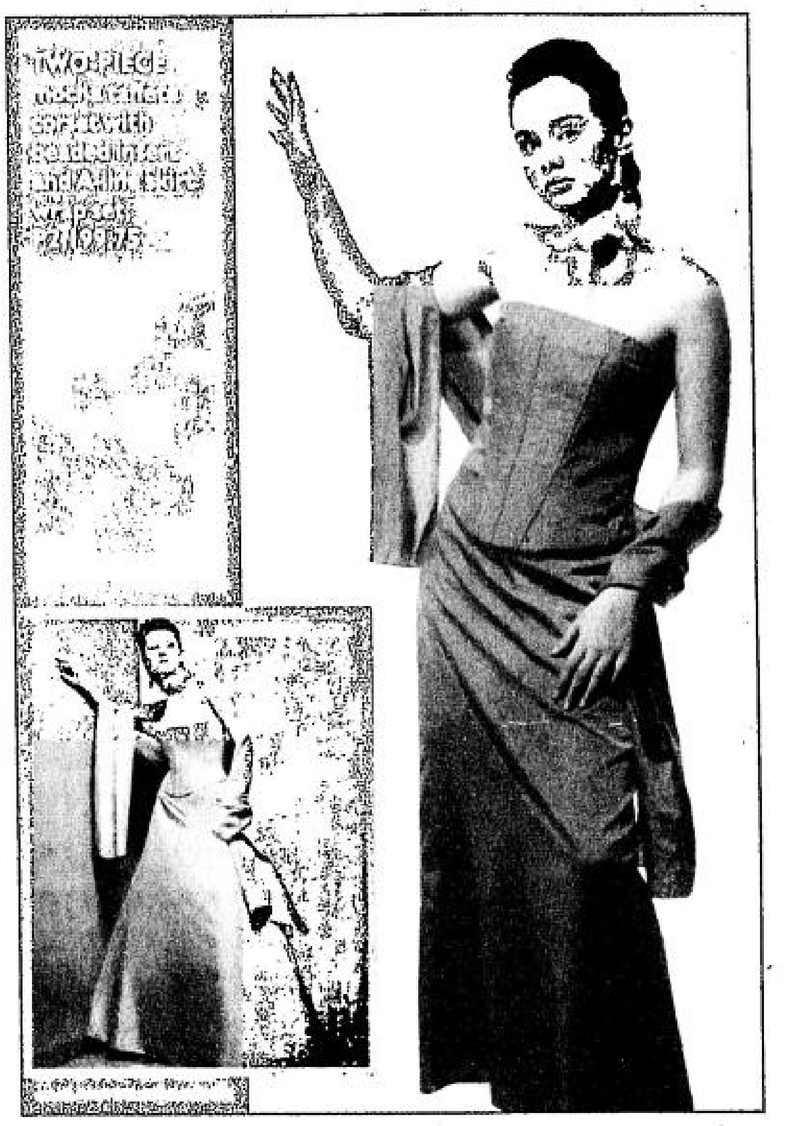

TWO-PIECE old rose taffeta surplice blouse with flower detail at waist and A-line skirt, P1,799.75


POWDER BLUE georgette strapless dress, P1,599.75


TWO-PIECE [illegible] corset with [illegible] and A-line skirt, wrap set, P1,[illegible]

Perfect prom dress isn't hard to find

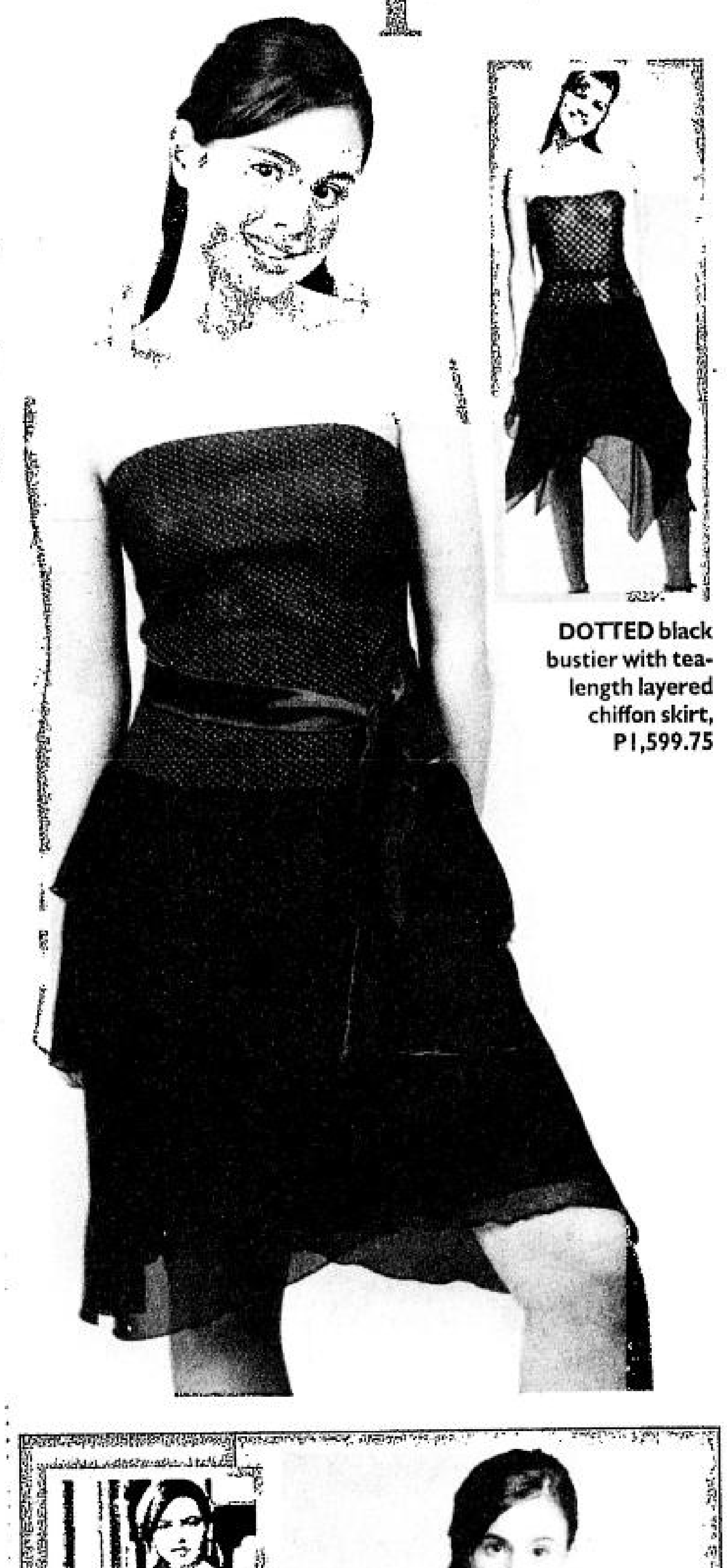
YOU don't have to look far for the perfect gown for prom night or graduation ball.

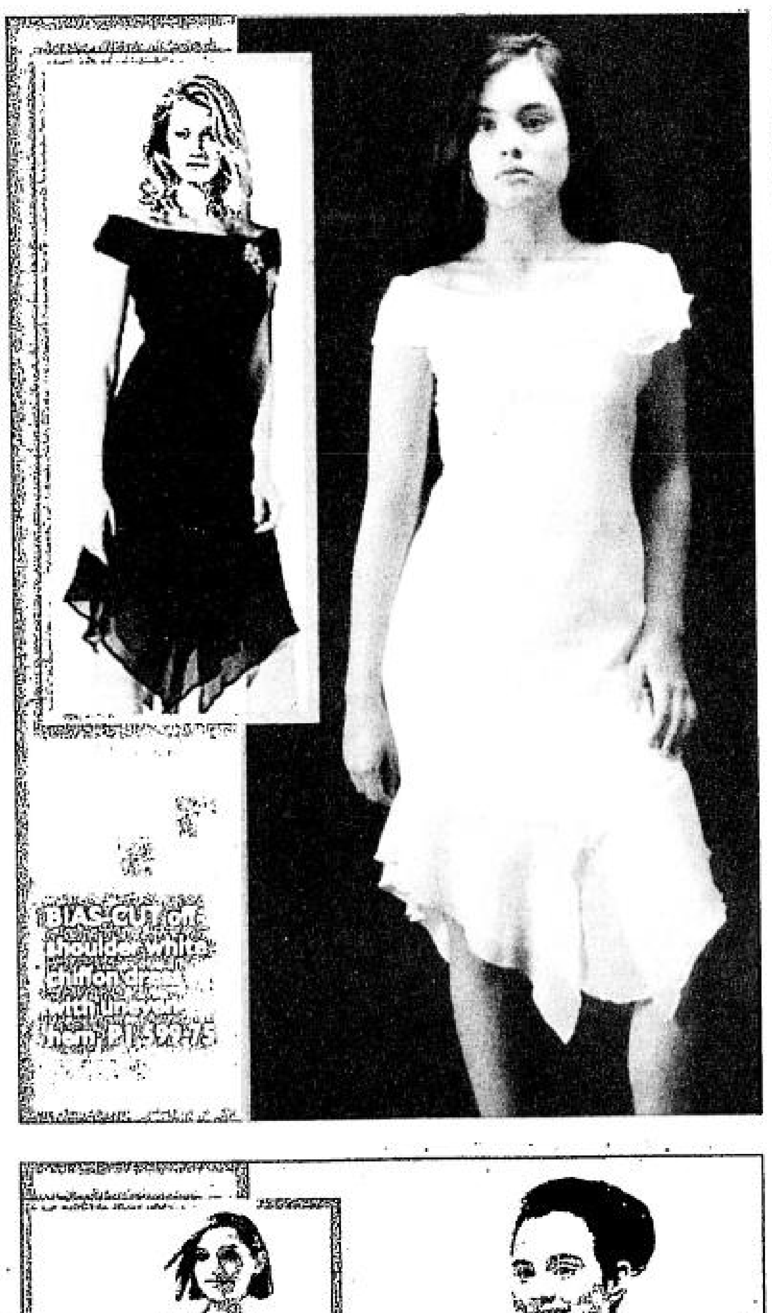
Visit Twenty Two B.C. at the SM Department Store Boutique Square and check out their ready-to-wear prom and graduation dresses. The label's collection includes dresses in lace, chiffon, satin and silk with elegant but youthful designs that may also be worn in other formal occasions. Highlights of this year's collection include modern bias-cut hemlines, dresses with flowers ribbons and mum-layered ruffles. You can choose a long or knee-length dress.

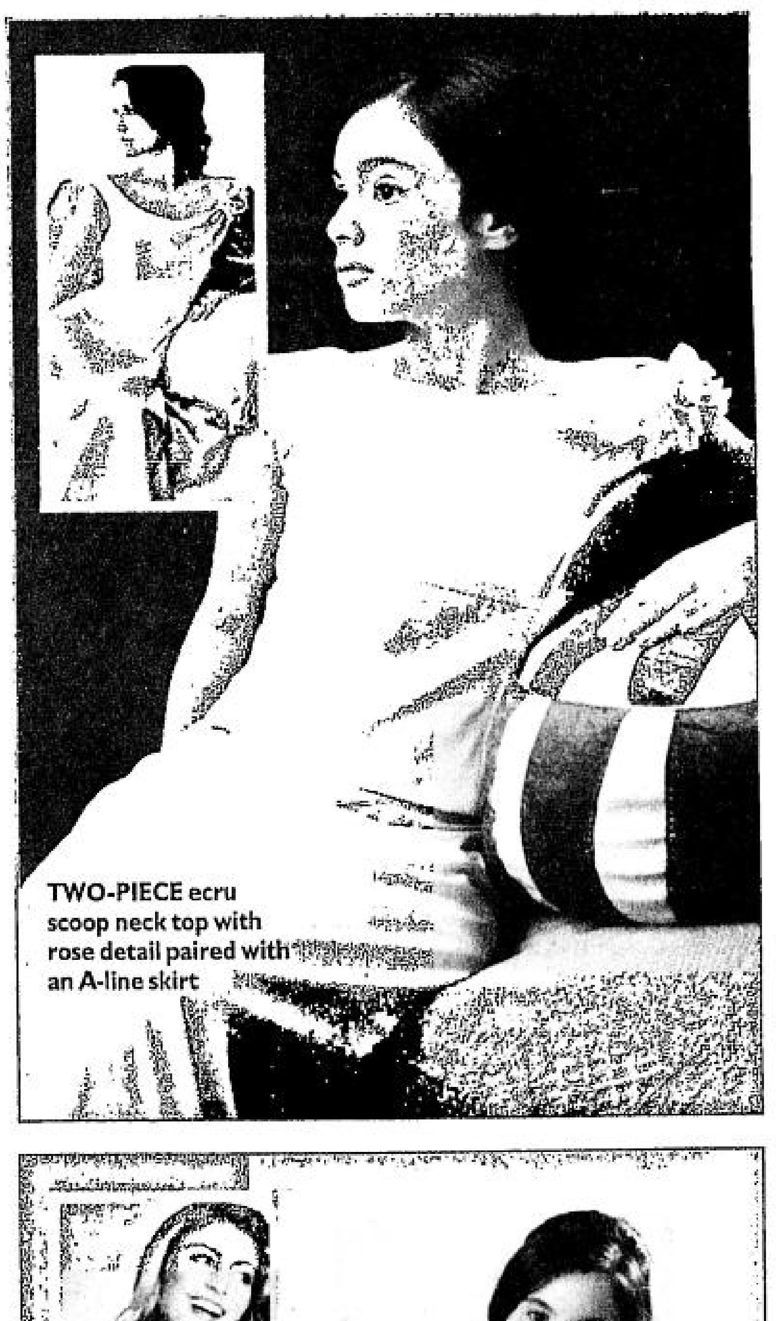
Twenty Two B.C. gives free alteration services on regular-priced items, a lifetime 10 percent discount upon accumulation of P8,000 worth of purchases, and 20 percent birthday discount for clients in its mailing list, among others.

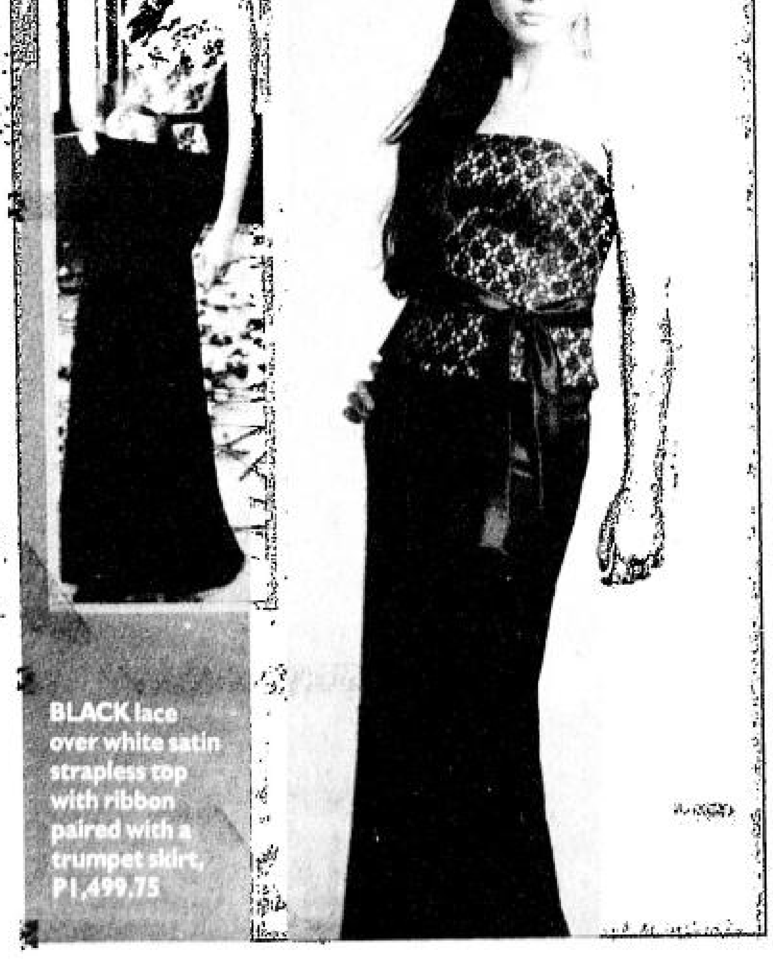
Twenty Two B.C. is at the Boutique Square of SM City North Edsa, SM Makati, SM Cubao, SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM Davao, SM Delgado, SM City Cebu, SM Bacoor, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM City Marilao and SM Mandurriao.

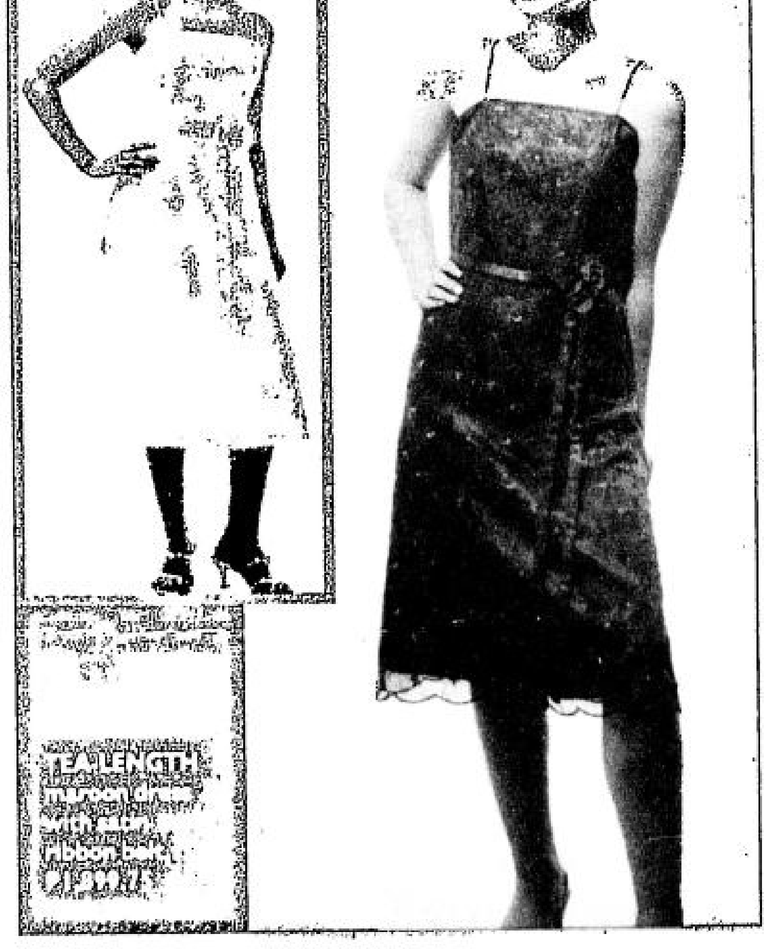
Visit www.22bc.com.ph.

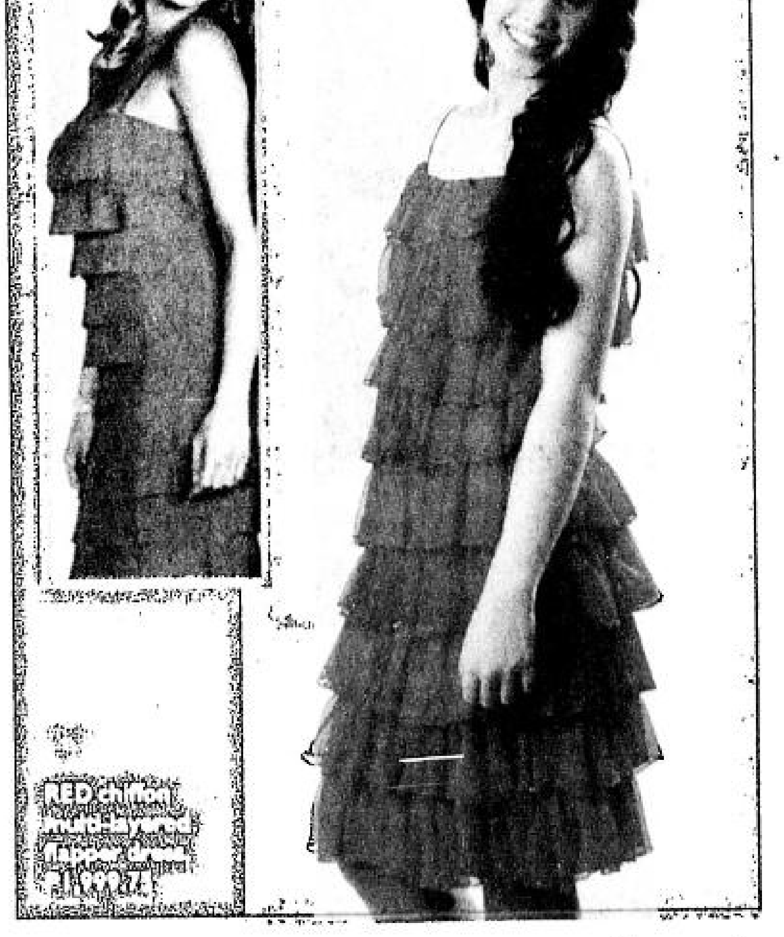

DOTTED black bustier with tea-length layered chiffon skirt, P1,599.75

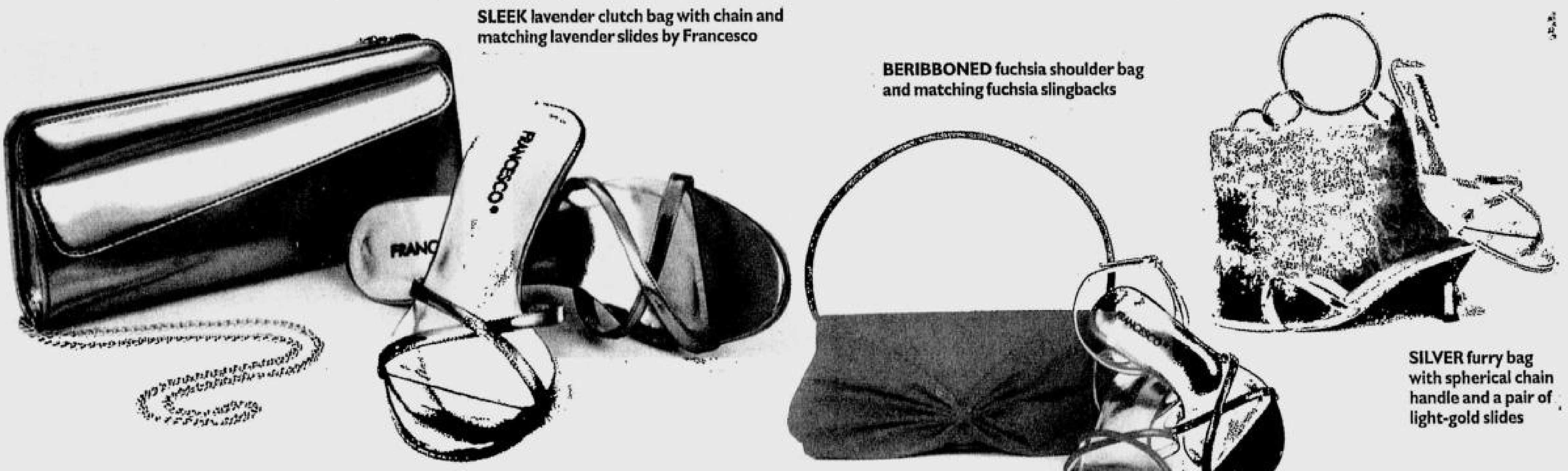

BIAS-CUT off shoulder white chiffon [illegible] P1,[illegible]


TWO-PIECE ecru scoop neck top with rose detail paired with an A-line skirt


BLACK lace over white satin strapless top with ribbon paired with a trumpet skirt, P1,499.75


TEA-LENGTH maroon [illegible] P1,[illegible]


RED chiffon [illegible] P1,[illegible]



SLEEK lavender clutch bag with chain and matching lavender slides by Francesco

BERIBBONED fuchsia shoulder bag and matching fuchsia slingbacks

SILVER furry bag with spherical chain handle and a pair of light-gold slides

Best foot forward on prom night

FRANCESCO has come up with a collection of dressy shoes for prom night and graduation ball.

Would-be prom queens and belles of the graduation ball can choose from Francesco's sophisticated sling-backs in fuchsia, turquoise, dark gray and ochre. Slides come in silvery lavender, light pink and beige. High-heeled sandals with ankle straps are available in red, black, yellow and beige.

You can match the shoes with shoulder, clutch or hand bags in lavender, fuchsia, raspberry, plum, orange, jeans and silver.

Francesco has stores at Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City; SM Megamall, Edsa Mandaluyong City; Robinsons Galleria, Ortigas Center, Pasig City; Alabang Town Center, Alabang, Muntinlupa City; SM City Bacoor, Cavite; Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City; and Shoppesville, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

New fashion hub

CATCH, a new fashion store at Robinsons Galleria and Market! Market!, opened recently.

Catch aims to cater mostly to a young crowd. Its footwear selection features striped and polka-dotted kitten heel slip-ons, ankle-strap stilettos with ribbon and stitch detailing, mules covered with spring flowers, high-heeled thongs with pastel-colored bows, pumps with double velcro straps, ballet flats, sneaker-inspired pointed boots, see-through trainers.

Clothes include polka-dotted ponchos, sequined shawls, red capri pants with vertical stripes, a knitted twin-set in pale pink, knitted mint green bolero and denim stretch minis.

Among the accessories are toe rings with pink, green and lavender gem stones; flower brooches, charm bracelets, bangles, '50s-inspired headbands, beribboned Swarovski necklace, leather purses.

Catch also has a wide selection of bags.

PARE! BOGCHI NA TAYO!!!
Isip ka kung saan tayo! Basta kailangan ko din mag-mall!
Ano ba feel mo?
Hmmmm..... La Paz Batchoy! o burger!... Thai barbecue!... tempural....
Layo 'ata nun ah...
'Tsaka kailangan ko rin tumingin ng hiking shoes...
Okey, tara na sa...
...and flowers para kay sweetheart...
Ok, mall nga..
Pati na motherboard para sa computer ko...
Ah ok, so...
Kailangan din ng bagong dog collar ni Brownie...
Ano ba talaga?! Saan naman natin hahanapin lahat yan?
Pare! Sa DPC YELLOW PAGES! Nanduon ang mga hinahanap ko!
OKAY OKAY! SO SAAN BA TAYO TALAGA KAKAIN?!!
Sa plato, op kors!
2004-2005 COTABATO TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
RIZAL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 NEGROS TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 NORTH LUZON TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 DIRECTORY
HOUSEHOLD & BUSINESS
COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL
2004-2005 METRO SUBURBAN TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004 - 2005 TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 CRUZTELCO MINDANAO TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 BAGUIO / LA TRINIDAD
2004-2005 CEBU TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
2004-2005 DAVAO TELEPHONE

Lahat sila dito nakalista!

DPC YELLOW PAGES

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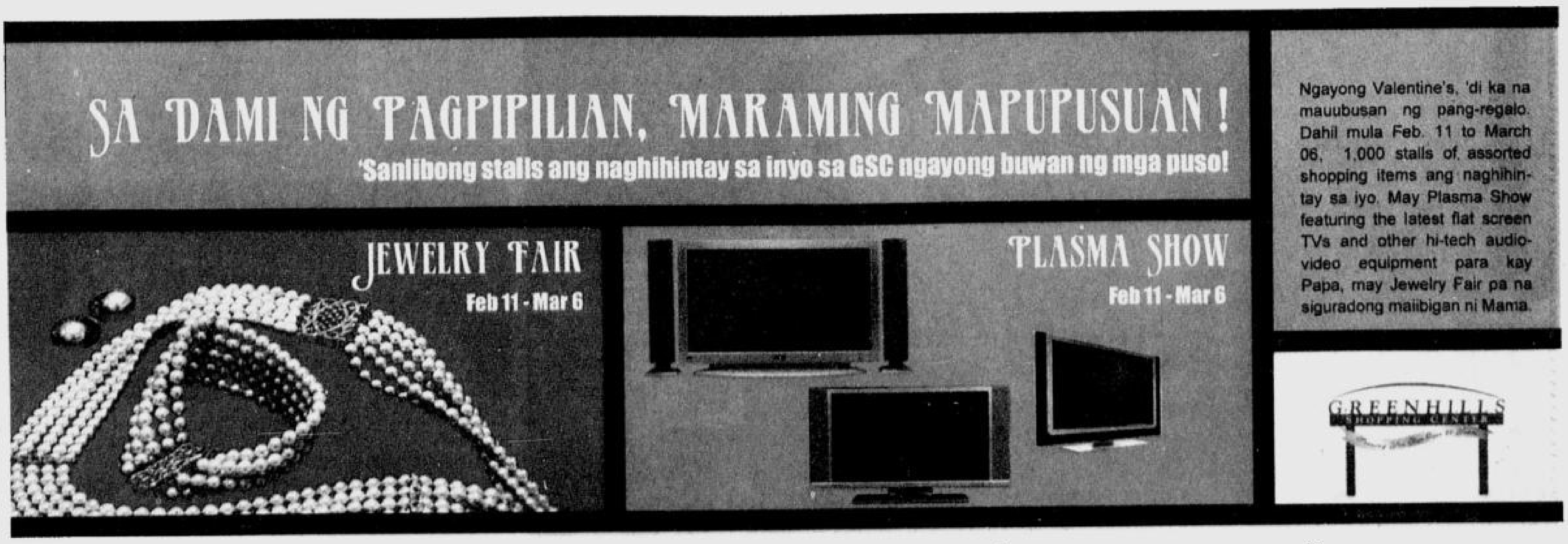


SA DAMI NG PAGPIPILIAN, MARAMING MAPUPUSUAN!

'Sanlibong stalls ang naghihintay sa inyo sa GSC ngayong buwan ng mga puso!

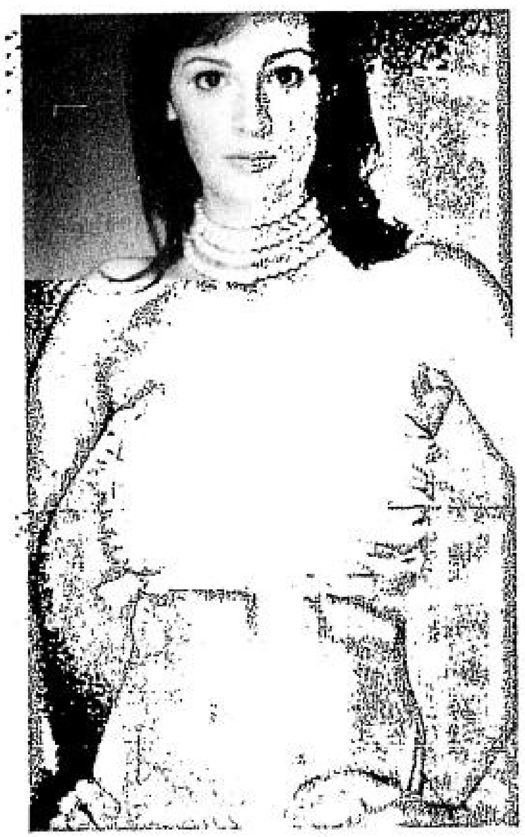
JEWELRY FAIR
Feb 11 - Mar 6

PLASMA SHOW
Feb 11 - Mar 6

Ngayong Valentine's, 'di ka na mauubusan ng pang-regalo. Dahil mula Feb. 11 to March 06, 1,000 stalls of assorted shopping items ang naghihintay sa iyo. May Plasma Show featuring the latest flat screen TVs and other hi-tech audio-video equipment para kay Papa, may Jewelry Fair pa na siguradong maiibigan ni Mama.

GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER

LILAC tube shantung dress worn with a beaded tulle capelet with bow accents



LUXE AND LOVELY. Light-camel satin strapless empire-cut dress with ruched tulle, pearl and ribbon accents (above); maroon shantung dress with beaded tulle capelet and hemline (right)

Blast from proms past

JM Goulbourn fuses vintage touches with modern details in her prom collection for the SM Boutique Square.

"Vibrant, charming, romantic and elegant" is how she describes her satin and shantung clothes in a palette that ranges from dramatic black and white to regal burgundy and gold tones, and pretty pink and lilac colors.'

Goulbourn goes very vintage with lace tulle, pearls, ribbons and bows, wrapping up the look with capelets and shrugs.

JM Goulbourn's prom collection is available at the SM Boutique Square.

PWU alumni reunion set

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University on its 85th founding anniversary will hold its alumni grand reunion tomorrow, 1-7 p.m., at Centennial Hall of The Manila Hotel.

GOINGS ON

CONCERT. Soprano Rachelle Gerodias and pianist Najib Ismail formally close the 2005 Philippine-German Month celebration today, 6 p.m., in Paco Park Presents. Admission is free.

MUSICAL. Taking centerstage on Feb. 27 in Concert at the Park is the Contemporarios Clasicos Tropa de Balles, the performing group of the ballet school in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. Admission is free.

EXHIBIT. E. Excel will hold a nutritional immunology exhibit on Feb. 28-March 6, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., at the lower G/F (atrium side), SM City Baguio. The exhibit is part of the Panagbenga Flower Festival in Baguio. Call (074) 4438387.

PROMO. PLDT myPad brings the MTV VJ Chat. Register at PLDT my Pad so you can pry into the lives of MTV VJs Cindy Kurleto, Marc Abaya, Maike Evers, Cesca Litton and John Joe. Log on to PLDT my-Pad on March 1-5 and catch the MTV VJ Chat session from 7-8 p.m.

WORKSHOP. The Japan Foundation, Manila will hold a Japanese-Language Teachers' Technology Workshop on March 5, 1 p.m., at JICA-Net Philippines Satellite Center, 4/F Juinio Hall, Osmeña cor. Agoncillo Sts., University of the Philippines, Diliman, QC. Call 8116155 to 58.

EXPO. The 10th Philippine World Building and Construction Exhibition will be held March 16-20 at World Trade Center, Pasay City. Top architects and interior designers will showcase their creations in this trade fair. Call 5343611/5332026.

FAIR. The 1st Philippine Call Center Job Fair is slated on March 19-20 at Expo Trade Hall of Festival Supermall. The fair will help job seekers find a fitting organization based on their skills and background. Call 8253482/0804.

12TH TRAVEL TOUR EXPO
Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano (left) and Rep. Edgar Chatto, chair of the House Committee on Tourism, sample the delicacies offered in one of the participating booths at the recent 12th Travel Tour Expo in SM Megatrade Hall. The expo was organized by the Philippine Travel Agencies Association.

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PRIMMING up for the prom /D2

LIFESTYLE

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DAVID Charlton, president of David's Salon, Inc., with his all-women cycling team led by Sen. Pia Cayetano

Femmes to the finish

By Alex Y. Vergara

The seven women cyclists of Team David's Salon carry the banner of wellness and empowerment

AS if being an athlete in the Philippines isn't hard enough, these seven women cyclists have had to grapple with the myriad responsibilities of motherhood and their respective careers in between races.

FEMMES/ E4

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DUTY FREE PHILIPPINES

Get up to 80% off in our Year of the Rooster Sale!

From February 1 to March 15, 2005, up to 80% discount on selected
fashion, toys, sporting goods, watches, eyewear,
housewares and electronics for you and your family to enjoy!

Promo is valid in Fiestamall and Duty Free Philippines Waterfront, Lahug, Cebu City.

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE Duty FREE.

PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 0322, SERIES OF 2005

GINA, little Anika and Junboy Leonor (center) with some of the godparents—Debbie Ledesma, Eena Kanapi, Gian Aboitiz, Mia Leonor, Inna Eusebio, Mickey Ocampo, Dennis Leonor, Junnie Rodriguez, Jr Ramos and Jun Bonoan

OUR PICTURE IS BEING TAKEN: Baby Santos, a surprised Emma Santiago, vivacious Tereret Liboro and Dona Lourdes Lopa-San Gabriel

BUSINESS tycoon and car collector Louie Ablaza with Burger Machine's Fe Rodriguez, fashion plate Marilou Tantoco Pineda and Southern gent Mari Lacson

WESTIN Philippie Plaza's Rose Libongco with Brenda Reyes and adorable Chit Salud; (standing) Karen Macasaet, Thelma Gana, the night's grand hostess Nene Leonor and Julita Villareal

Blessed day for baby and happy octogenarian

CLOSE CIRCLE OF CIVIC-ORIENTED WOMEN: (Seated) ultra glam Meldy Cojuangco with Rosita Lesaca, Karen Macasaet and Lulu Castañeda; (standing) Menchu Concepcion, Pacita de Guzman and Nene Leonor

NCCA deputy director Emilie Versoza Tiongco with stage and TV actress Carmen Enriquez, Nenet Puyat, Doris Tiongco and the celebrator Charing T.

MANILLE'S BARRIO FIESTA: Guests Noel Barrameda and Joe Dimla with popular fashion designer Edgar Allan

RENE Tiongco with invitees Vic Puyat and wife Nenet

IN NEW YORK: (Standing) Manhattan dermatologist Dr. Ida Tiongco, Charing Tiongco and Alex Sarmiento; (seated) elegant and attractive Maureen Tiongco Theyard, original Broadway lead actress of "Flower Drum Song"; and Harry Theyard, NY City Opera tenor

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

IT WAS the best Sunday of her new life: **Anika Marie Ocampo Leonor** was baptized at the Shrine of Jesus, The Way, The Truth and The Life, in the Pope John Paul II Youth Center along Diosdado Macapagal Highway, Pasay City.

At the precise moment when chrisom and holy water were administered on her, the Sunday afternoon sun shone its brilliant rays on Anika.

It was definitely a cool sight, *palanggas*, as officiating Bishop **Federico Escaler** triumphantly welcomed her "into God's loving family."

There were 14 mega hot achievers as Anika's godfathers and godmothers, who were especially chosen "to be her guide and counsel through life" by her dad, **Junboy**, who just happens to be the celebrated drummer of The Dawn, and by her mom, **Gina**, the brilliant GlobeSolutions group product manager.

After the baptism, a Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated by Bishop Escaler. Afterward, the guests went to the fab reception at the sprawling Leonor Compound on Taft Avenue, in Pasay City.

Amid lush foliage and waterfalls, Anika's celebration had a crossover gathering of her dad's pals from the music circuit and her mom's gang from the telecommunications industry. Also greeting Anika on her baptism were her adorable cousins with their mamas and papas, her paternal grandpa, **Jun**, and his business colleagues, and her grandma, **Nene**, and her close circle of civic-oriented socialites.

Hostess with the mostest, Anika's grandma, Nene Leonor, in a **Marilyn Monroe**-inspired black halter dress and luscious silver South Sea Pearls, hopped tables, making sure all the invitees had a fill of the excellent dinner, catered by The Plaza, natch.

And since the party went on till way past Anika's bedtime, I guess they were all having a good time, while the bubbly baby was way beyond what was going on, dahlings.

Isn't it ironic that the ones who have more fun at baptisms are the ones who can't communicate at all with our pretty princess-for-a-day, Anika? Oh well.

Dynamic at 85

When you're 85, hale, hearty and vivaciously fun, how do you mark your birthday? Most everyone will do it at home, but this lady celebrated hers in two continents no less.

The dynamic lady, **Rosario "Charing" Tiongco**, had, first, a fab barrio fiesta theme party in Manille, hosted by her son, smart **Rene Tiongco**.

Two days after, Rosario packed her gear and jetted off to New York where her daughter, **Dr. Ida Tiongco**, and her husband **Alex Sarmiento**, hosted a fun luncheon for her at the Big Apple.

The Manille barrio fiesta was held at the sprawling garden of popular top fashion designer, **Edgar Allan**, Rene's business partner in that thriving couture and ready-to-wear business in Glorietta, Ayala Center.

Eye-catching buntings crisscrossed the garden, as a rondalla of blind musicians played native tunes to the delight of the invitees.

Fashionably on time were pianist **Sari Canocosa** and stage and TV actress **Carmen Enriquez** ("Doña Agueda" to her fans). Bonsai collector Dr. **Oding Reyes** and fern expert **Noni Dolera**, couldn't praise enough the lush garden.

Digging into the native dinner catered by **Alice Patag** were **John** and **Glory Boren**, and businessman **George Yao** (of the famous Silver Swan Soy Sauce) among others.

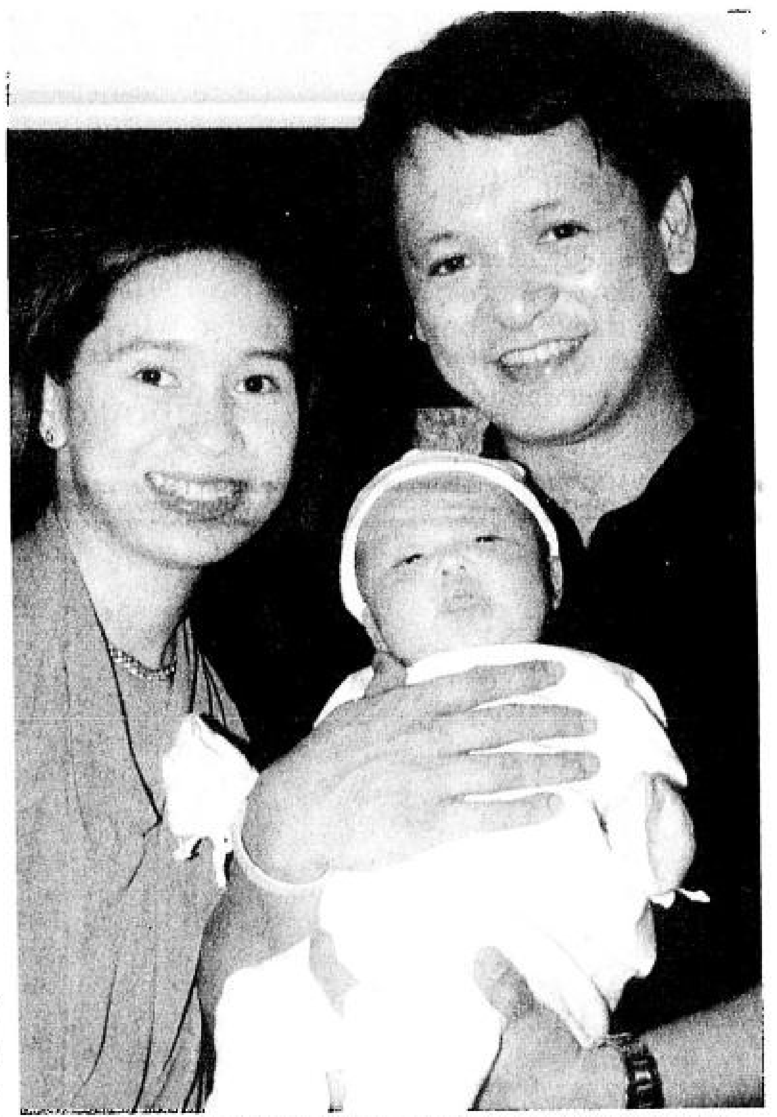
Après dinner, a surprise medley of native dances, choreographed by Charing's niece, **Palmyra Tobias**, was performed by the celebrator's relatives (spanning four generations), no less.

But it was the littlest "*apo-sa-tuhod*", sisters **Murielle** and **Gabrielle Lucas**, who stole the show, *palanggas*.

Also present was deputy director **Emilie Versoza Tiongco** of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Early the next morning, Charing and her son, Rene, jetted to New York where a birthday luncheon was held at the Landmark restaurant, Tavern on the Green, in the heart of Central Park. It was hosted by her daughter, Ida, who has a thriving dermatology practice in the tony Upper East Side of Manhattan, and son-in-law Alex, who gathered some of Charing's New York-based pals and relatives, so that they could all greet the birthday gal.

Singing "Happy Birthday" were **Harry Theyard** and wife, **Maureen Tiongco**, (she was the lead actress in Broadway's "Flower Drum Song" long before **Lea Salonga**'s lead role in Miss Saigon!).



AND ANIKA MAKES THREE: Gina Ocampo with her little princess Anika and proud daddy Junboy Leonor

LULU Castañeda with Justa Tantoco; (standing) Suzanne Laudico and Tessie Villarama

Top makeup artist

Now, *palanggas*, Shu Uemura gave us something to be excited about when they jetted in international chief makeup artist, **Kakuyasi Uchiide**, from Japan to preview their 2005 Spring/Summer Mode Makeup Collection entitled "Reveries."

Shu Uemura's fantastic team of brilliant brand manager, **Tina Tinio**, chief makeup artist **Xeng Zulueta**, and assistant manager **Dione Cotoco**, organized an intimate event at The Edge for Mr. Uchiide.

"Reveries" was inspired by the shimmering reflection of light on water. K. Uchiide's work on the models was a masterpiece of impressionist watercolors that brought loud applause from the delighted audience, *palanggas*.

At the Zen Restaurant, the chi-chi pack talked about the fab collection. Enjoying the makeovers and product trials while sipping their customized Smirnoff and Tanqueray cocktails were fashion plates, **Mons Tantoco**, **Jackie Cohen-Antonio** and L'Oreal's **Angelique Villaraza**.

The male partygoers included **Tim Yap**, **Marco Antonio**, **Rhett Eala**, **DJ Montano**, and L'Oreal managing director, the *très charmant* Monsieur **David Ennes**.

Thanks to Philtown (The Edge), Smirnoff and Tanqueray Premium Gin. Check out Shu Uemura's products at Rustan's Makati and Tower.

"REVERIES " model Rachel Soriano with L'Oreal Philipines managing director David Ennes

ARCHITECT Anton Mendoza and top makeup artist Xeng Zulueta

MODEL Kristelle, renowned Shu Uemura makeup artist Kakuyasu Uchiide, and brand manager Tina Tinio

Jackie Lou Blanco feels perfectly matched with what she's doing now—as a fitness enthusiast, a wife and a 41-year-old mother with three kids, and an actress. Many people know her today as a physical fitness instructor, with her trophy-winning biceps. "If you ask me which role is closest to my heart or complements me best," she says, "it's my being a wife and mom. All the others make me richer as a person."

Her advice to women who are looking for their perfect match: "Be honest about what it is that you really want. It's not what your husband wants, it's not what your children want, it's what will make you happy. I always say that we live with the choices we make."

Liezl Martinez The former child actress, mother of three and wife to actor Albert Martinez, has found a new career in the furniture business. Her perfect match? All of the above. "It's all perfect for me now, like a jigsaw puzzle that fits perfectly," she explains. "My business works for me because I'm happy and it does not disrupt my being a mom, which is still my priority. Everything I'm doing now is a perfect match, they all complement each other."

Her advice to other women looking for their perfect match: "Do what you love to do and it will show in your life. If you have passion for it and it doesn't disrupt the other aspects of your life, then everything will fall into place."

Perfect match

Avon pays tribute to Filipinas who find complementarity between identity and work

SOME women instinctively know, once they see it, what's the perfect match for them; others don't realize it's been staring them in the face all along. That perfect match may be a career, a true friendship, an advocacy, the partner for life one has been looking for.

Avon, the global beauty company, pays tribute to the Filipino women who have found their "perfect match" that has given substance and meaning to their life, work and status as celebrities.

With its extensive lineup of products and new shade palettes formulated with Avon-exclusive technology to match the Filipina skin type and skin tone, the new Avon Color will help women find and discover their perfect match. The new collection includes the Ultra Color Rich Lipstick, the True Color Eyeshadow Quad, the True Color Blush Duo, the Personal Match Pressed Powder, the Personal Match Concealer, Glimmersticks for Lips and for Eyes and Perfect Wear Long-Lasting Mascara.

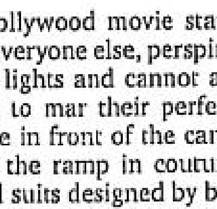
Avon is the world's leading direct seller of beauty and related products, with $6.8 billion in annual revenues. Avon markets to women around the world through 4.4 million independent sales representatives. Avon product lines include such recognizable brand names as Avon Color, Anew, Skin-So-Soft, Avon Solutions, Avon Naturals, Avon Fashions and Avon Wellness. Avon also markets an extensive line of fashion jewelry and apparel. It is also the largest corporate supporter of the breast cancer cause. Log on to www.avoncompany.com.

Chin-Chin Gutierrez has found her perfect match in her environmental activism, where she uses her popularity and influence as a movie and stage actress to spread awareness on waste management and preserving our forests and fishing resources. Although busy with her artistic career, she feels that her environmental commitment is "really a matter of making time and making choices in achieving a sustainable lifestyle."

Rissa Samson A professional model since 2000, she is also a newspaper columnist, writing about beauty, lifestyle and fashion for young readers. Like modeling, writing a column is not a 9-to-5 job, allowing her to spend more time with her son who's now in Grade I, and whom she tutors every evening.

Rissa finds her "perfect match" in modeling and writing. She's looking at going to school again for further studies in business administration, and writing fiction when she's "mature enough."

Dealing with a 'sticky' situation



MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THE COOL post-Christmas weather is over. I have to turn on my air-conditioner in the evenings, otherwise I wake up several times during the night all sticky from the heat and humidity.

Most of my e-mail messages now also contain complaints about excessive sweating and body odors. I myself was panicking as my current anti-perspirant wasn't strong enough to prevent wet stains on my colored shirts, calling attention in particular to the underarm areas where the fabric turned into a darker shade.

Going to Sunday Mass is horrifying because people hold your hand at a certain point of the service and my palms are very sweaty. I have switched to stick anti-perspirant/deodorants like Nivea's Whitening, and Block and White's because they don't darken the underarms, prevent odor and are strong enough to hold back wetness a little longer.

But make sure your arms are in shape so you can wear sleeveless blouses and be able to apply the deodorant after getting dressed. Stick deodorants tend to make streaks on colored garments with sleeves that one has to slide over the head.

My old standby, Driclor, is also fantastic for the underarms (although a bit expensive at P500+). It keeps my underarms bone dry. I have recently taken to applying it even on my feet. Wait for it to dry before you slip on a blouse to avoid stains.

I have been recommending Driclor to my readers for years and many have e-mailed to express their satisfaction with the product. Many people with sweaty palms refuse to use it for fear of staining anything they hold. Stumped, I called my dermatologist Dr. Vicki Belo, to ask what were the other options.

Botox injections apparently are the secret of most supermodels and Hollywood movie stars who, like everyone else, perspire under hot lights and cannot allow sweat to mar their perfect appearance in front of the camera or on the ramp in couture gowns and suits designed by big names like Valentino, Balenciaga, Armani, Gucci.

Small needle

Botox is injected to a problem area, paralyzing it and deactivating sweat glands in that part for four to five months. Dr. Belo even showed me a video of the procedure at her Rustan's branch. The needle was so small the patient did not seem to feel any pain.

Wow, imagine never having to worry about sweaty armpits, palms, and feet the whole summer? How liberating! Of course, supermodels and Hollywood celebrities make tons of money so price is no object. Besides, they stand to lose more if the paparazzi are able to sell sweaty shots of them to the tabloids.

I think it was the National Enquirer that once published photographs of certain gorgeous stars (I won't name names) in sweat-stained clothes while hanging out at some party or simply enjoying a cup of coffee with pals. I never saw them endorsing toiletries and cosmetics after that.

What is good about having Botox here is that it costs so much less than in the States. And by the time its effects fade in four to five months, it will be almost the colder 'ber' season and we won't be perspiring as much anymore.

> I have been recommending Driclor to my readers for years and many have e-mailed to express their satisfaction with the product

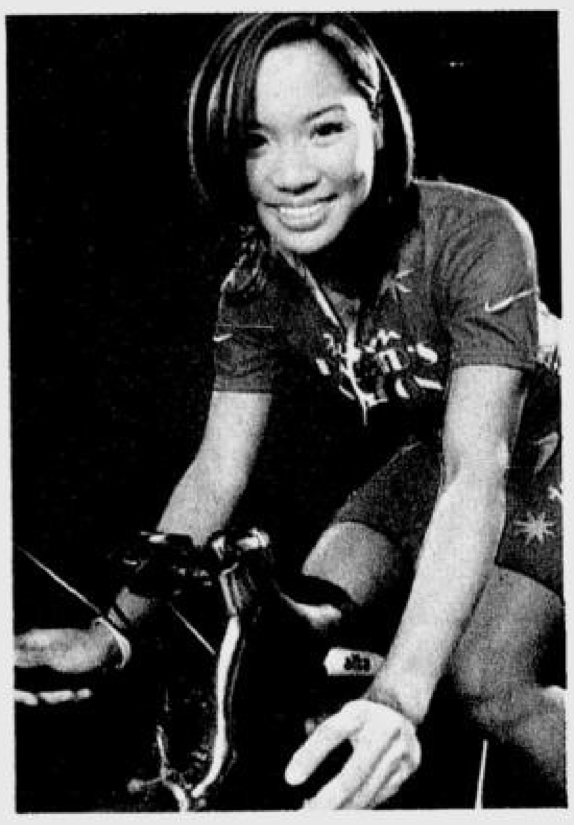
Well, those who still have to deal with the perspiration problem when the rainy season begins can go for another Botox session that will last another four to five months.

Cost will vary from person to person. You have to visit the clinic for consultation to know how many ampoules are needed, which will be the basis for determining the cost. I am considering bringing a friend to the clinic because he is very self-conscious of his very sweaty palms.

Stiefel's Driclor is available in leading drug stores. Nivea and Block and White are sold in groceries, department stores and drug stores. For Botox inquiries, call 8442939 or e-mail info@belomed.com.

Announcement: I will be speaking on emergency beauty tips on wedding day, 11 a.m.-12 nn, at the Bridal Fair 2005 this Sunday, Feb. 27, at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel. The fair will be held 10 a.m.-9 p.m. at the Harbor Garden. Admission is free. Call the Westin catering office at 8326999.

KAYE Lopez


ANI de Leon

MARITESS Bitbit

SEN. Pia Cayetano

MARITA Lucas

BING Alto

MONA Valdes

Femmes to the finish

From page F1

Since funding was hard to come by, they also had to shell out their own money to pay for their training and equipment. That was until someone began footing the bill.

That someone is David Charlton, president of David's Salon Inc., one of the country's biggest beauty parlor chains (180 salons and counting) in the country.

Charlton recently led other sponsors such as Rudy Project, Wella, In2It and Promax in introducing members of his cycling team to the public.

Not that they needed any introduction, as these women have been competing for years and are quite prominent in their respective fields. Dressed in tight-fitting electric blue jerseys emblazoned with the words Team David's Salon on their chests and matching cycling shorts, Bing Alto, Maritess Bitbit, Marita Lucas, Ani de Leon, Kaye Lopez, Mona Valdes and Sen. Pia Cayetano are the seven women who comprise the all-women's team.

Before being elected to the Senate, Cayetano had been competing (and winning!) both in cycling and marathon. Although much of her waking hours are now devoted to legislative work, she still finds time to train and compete once in a while.

She's in the team, she says, not so much to win, but to support her fellow athletes and draw attention to her three-pronged advocacy: women, health and the environment.

"I joined them because I support David's primary objective of women empowerment," says Cayetano. "When people see me do things out of the ordinary, they get inspired even if they're not into sports. By joining Team David, I hope to inspire them even more to live a healthy lifestyle and to take care of the environment."

Virtual manager

As the team's virtual manager, Charlton pays for the members' uniforms and certain bike parts. The cyclists also get support for much-needed logistics such as transportation, food and lodging especially during out-of-town races.

"Since we don't get any funding from the government," says Lopez, 22, the youngest member of the team, "Bing thought of soliciting the support of the private sector."

People who've known Charlton since he set foot in the Philippines 26 years ago from his native England to open the first Revér Salon at the Mandarin Oriental are the least bit surprised about his latest involvement. Not too many people know a cyclist's needs better than him.

"We approached David because we have a great deal of respect for him as an athlete, businessman and person," says de Leon. "We knew he had all the qualities we were looking for in a sponsor."

"David is sports-minded," adds Alto. "He's also familiar with the beauty of being a woman because of his business. That's why he understands and respects the female athlete."

Apart from being an expert in women's grooming needs, Charlton used to be a competitive cyclist himself. Because of his killer schedule, however, he hardly finds the time to train these days. But like Cayetano, he supports the need for women empowerment through sports.

"Work and an additional 40 pounds got in the way of my training," he says with a grin. "Since I'm all for women to feel and look good about themselves, I decided to support them. They can do more for themselves and the sports as a group."

Cayetano's lesser-known "sisters" are quite accomplished in their own right. It didn't hurt that like the neophyte lawmaker, all of them look fit and fairly attractive, though Charlton insists the women's looks weren't his primary motivation in saying yes to them.

After all, having known each other and raced together for years both here and abroad, these women were the ones who banded together to form the team.

"They're not required to look beautiful," says Charlton, "as long as they're presentable and personable."

Quite accomplished

De Leon, Alto and Lopez graduated from the University of the Philippines with degrees in interior design, psychology and metallurgical engineering, respectively. Valdes is a licensed medical doctor in Indonesia. Bitbit is a private in the Philippine army, while Lucas is a gardener at the sprawling Eternal Gardens Memorial Park.

Aside from Cayetano, Lucas and Valdes are married and have kids.

Although some of them aren't exactly that hard up, the sport places a considerable dent on their pockets. The cheapest racer bike alone could set them back by P100,000.

Then they have to allot money for training. De Leon, for instance, had to spend close to P100,000 on a three-month training period prior to a big race. Valdes could very well afford a decent jersey, but she couldn't stand the thought of dipping into the family's budget, which could otherwise go to buying books or clothes for her children.

"I used to look like a kite whenever I raced, as I made do with my husband's jersey," she says with a hearty chuckle. "Thanks to David, I can now wear something my size."

With their minds freed of such mundane concerns, members of Team David's Salon now have more time to focus on looking and feeling good as they aim for the finish line.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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